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REVIEW, &c.

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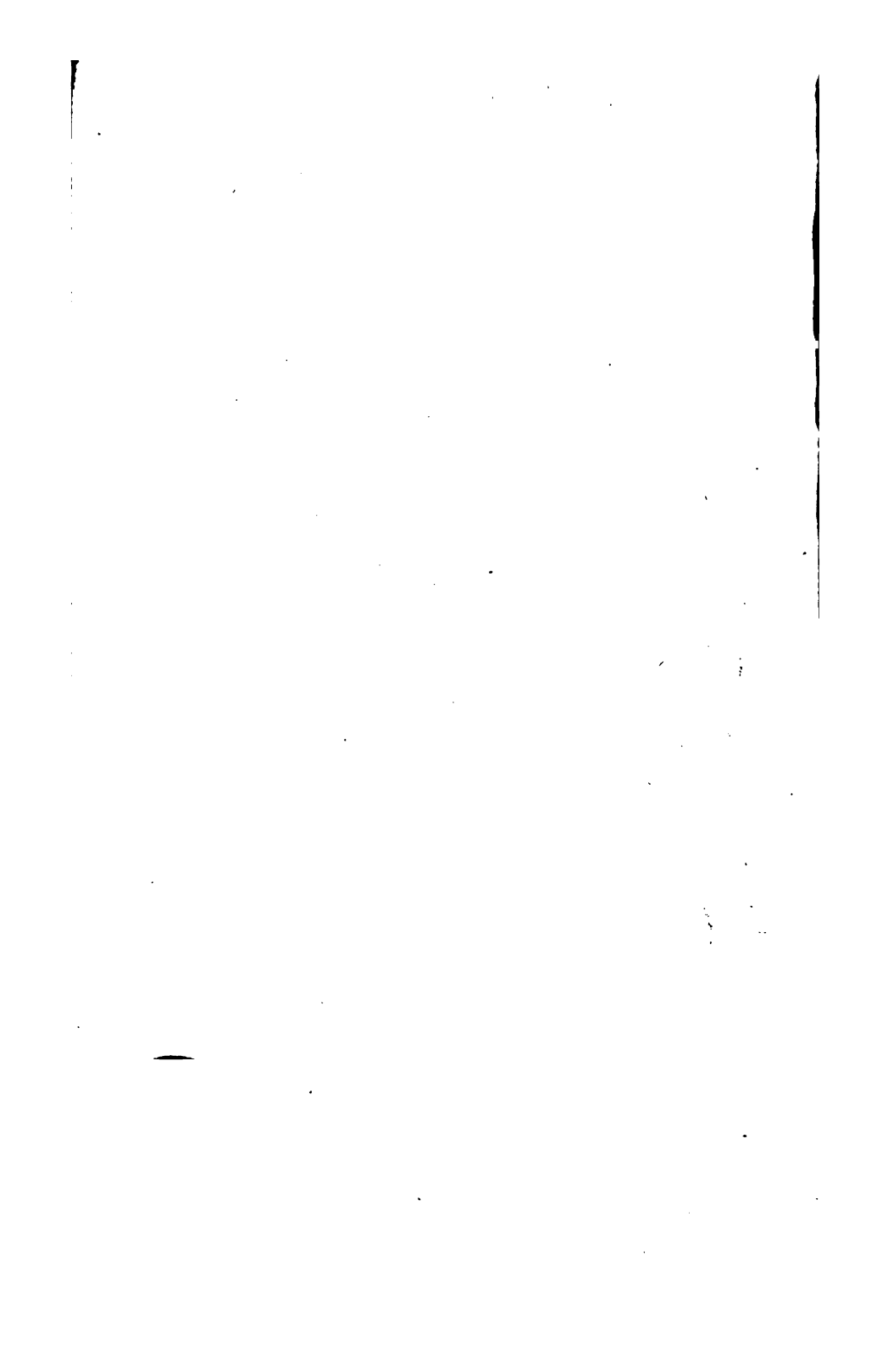
REVIEW  
OF THE  
EVENTS AND TREATIES  
WHICH ESTABLISHED THE  
BALANCE OF POWER  
IN EUROPE,  
AND THE  
BALANCE OF TRADE  
IN FAVOR OF  
GREAT BRITAIN.

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*Quoted* 1796.  
*Henry Fox* *and* *Lord Sandwich* *in* *1796*

223. j. 24.





**R E V I E W**  
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**EVENTS AND TREATIES**  
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**GREAT BRITAIN.**

---

*Quindax* 1796.  
*by Henry John Lord Brougham*

*223. j. 24.*



# INTRODUCTION.

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## CONTENTS.

The Maintenance of the Independency of the European Nations the Source of the present War—The Proceedings of France were subversive of this established Principle of the Law of Nations—Causes of the Success of France—Effects of it—Decline of both—Arrangement of the Evidence respecting the Balance of Power and of Trade.

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IN the present crisis of Europe it is of importance to trace the existing War to its true source.—On the part of France, hostilities were avowedly commenced, for the conquest of the Netherlands ; on the part of Great Britain and its Allies, for the maintenance of that system of European policy, upon which independent states had acted for ages, and upon which the return of Peace can alone be deemed safe and permanent.

Information upon this subject is the more necessary, at this juncture, because this system seems either to have been overlooked or lost sight

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of,

of, in an impatience for the restoration of that tranquillity which all equally desire, but which those who love their country can only assent to, upon terms consistent with the just rights of independent nations; and which Great Britain, in particular, can only look forward to, provided it can be obtained with safety to its constitution and security to its resources.

That the French nation, at the fall of the Monarchy and the introduction of the Levelling and Revolutionary System, avowed its plan of universal conquest is no longer a subject of dispute. Its aggrandizement was to be effected, partly by its armies, and partly by instilling its ruinous principles into the minds of the industrious orders of the people, to excite them to rebellion, in all the countries against which it had commenced or meditated hostilities.

The success of France may be referred to the following causes;

To the immense resources, which it created by the emission of paper currency, or giving to assignats a fictitious value, without any real property or fund to support their circulation, yet compelling the acceptance of them, under pain of death;

To

To a general seizure and pillage of the public and private property in France itself, and in the countries which have been plundered by its armies ;

To the system of terror, which forced every man capable of bearing arms, not only in France, but in the countries which have submitted to the French arms, to serve as a common soldier.

The effects of these causes have been as calamitous, as the causes were new and disastrous ;

The regular resources of no established government could keep pace with the resources of a country, which consisted of the whole of its accumulated wealth seized, laid out and lavished, as the ambition and avarice of the usurpers might chuse ;

The circulating paper currency of no country, which depended on credit arising from the conviction of its being the representative of real value, could keep pace with the nominal assignats, which the people were to accept for real value, under pain of death ; and this compulsion extending, not only over France itself, but over the conquered countries ;

The regular armies of no country, in which agriculture, arts and commerce were to be protected, could bear a proportion, in point of numbers, to the armies of France, composed of the mass of the male inhabitants of the most populous country in Europe and of the subjugated countries, more particularly when the services of these numbers were to be forced, and victory purchased by sacrificing as many thousands of French, as composed the regular armies of their opponents

The system of terror, ingrafted upon the first enthusiasm of the French armies, for a liberty which they did not comprehend, placed their legions in a situation, where the executioner was to drive on to action when enthusiasm might cease.

These causes and these effects, from the nature of them, could continue only, while the nominal resources and the system of terror continued; but it was difficult for any political wisdom to calculate the period of the experiment, though it might foresee the certainty of the result; hence the secessions of Prussia, of several of the German and of the Italian Princes  
and

and of Spain, from the Powers who had confederated to preserve the independence of the nations of Europe, against this ebullition of revolutionary frenzy and of forced resources.

At length the evil appears to have wrought itself out. The forced resources of France have reached an approaching bankruptcy, and the war against civilized nations begins to promise them a favorable issue ; for neither can the numerous hosts which the executioner had driven into the field be longer effectually recruited by requisitions, nor the system of terror be longer veiled by licentiousness. Happy will it be for France, and happy for Europe, if the stings of conscious atrocities be all that remain ; happier still, if the example of sedition leading to rebellion and to the murder of good men, shall teach surrounding nations to preserve their civilization, and to see that the blessings of peace depend on the maintenance of the regular government and laws, which prevent the multitude from committing wrongs or crimes.

With the object of bringing forward the evidence, upon which the terms of peace can proceed with safety and honor,

We



We shall take a comparative view of the present Belligerent Powers, viz. France with the Netherlands (Austrian and Dutch), on the one hand, and Britain, Austria and Sardinia, on the other, in respect of territory, military and naval strength and resources; connecting with this comparison, the naval aid which Russia has furnished, and the military contingent stipulated by treaty.

We shall review the treaties in succession, which have been formed to create and maintain the balance of power in Europe, drawing from each period of these treaties, the inferences which they authorize, and illustrating them by historical proofs.

We shall review the commercial treaties which have been formed, in connection with the political, as they have established the commerce of Great-Britain with the Netherlands, and have thrown the balance of trade in its favor.

We shall examine the political effects, which necessarily would result from the former balance of power in Europe being destroyed; and offer some conjectures, respecting the political effects which would follow, from another balance of power being established analogous to it.

We

We shall examine the commercial effects to Europe, and in a particular manner to Britain, supposing the present conquests of France to be annexed to it, under any practicable form of government, compared with the commercial effects, supposing either the former balance of trade with the Netherlands, in favour of Britain, to be restored, or in the present state of Europe a general peace to take place.



## P A R T I.

Comparative view of the Belligerent Powers, viz. France, with the Netherlands (Austrian and Dutch) on the one hand, and Britain, Austria and Sardinia, on the other; in respect of Territory, Military and Naval Strength, and Resources.

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## C O N T E N T S.

Extent of the Dominions, Coasts, and Conquests of France, supposing these Conquests annexed to it—  
—Compared with the Dominions, Coasts. &c. of the Belligerent Powers—Extent of the Military and Naval Power of France upon the same supposition—Compared with those of Great Britain and its Allies—Extent of the Resources of France upon the like supposition—Three distinct Aspects of them,—Comparison of them with the Resources of Great Britain and its Allies—Results.

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IN a survey of the dominions of France, we must include not only the territory of the monarchy,

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marchy, before the opening of the war, but the accessions of country which the armies of the Republic, at the present juncture, command.

The French monarchy extended from the Pyrenees to the frontier of the Austrian Netherlands, and winding round, by the borders of Liege, took in Lorraine and Alsace, then stretched upwards, towards Savoy and Switzerland.

The conquests of the Republic have added to it part of Piedmont and Nice, on the side of Italy ; the districts on the French side of the Rhine ; the territories of several of the German Princes, and free towns on the Lower Rhine, viz. Liege, Treves, Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle, and the whole of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands which formerly were subjected partly to Austria, and partly to the States General ; nor ought it to be omitted, that by the late treaty with Spain, that kingdom has become, in a greater degree than by the Family Compact, annexed to France.

1. With this immense and connected territory, France possesses a coast extending from the Pyrenees to the Zuyder Zee, with the command of the rivers in the Low Countries, and

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of the sea ports of the Dutch, by which it may establish a trade and a marine in the Narrow Seas,\* and obstruct the navigation of the rivers which lead into the interior of Germany; while, at the same time, it has on the Mediterranean, not only its own ancient coasts and ports, but a considerable extent of the coast on the borders of Italy; and since the late treaty with Spain, access to, and the controul, if not the command, of the coasts of that kingdom.

If we compare the territory of Britain, Austria, and Sardinia, with this extent of the French dominions in Europe, we find, that the extent of the British Isles bears no proportion even to that of the fallen monarchy; and that the little territories of Sardinia are rather what must be protected than what can afford assistance. The German and more remote dominions of Austria, if they bear a nearer proportion to the former kingdom of France, are separated into distant portions.

The coasts of Britain and Ireland alone are to furnish the navy, which, with the contingent of

\* The term "Narrow Seas" is retained, because it occurs in all the Treaties, but in the annexed sketch, these seas are distinguished by the name now in use, viz. "North Seas."

Russia, will have to oppose the marine of France, issuing from almost all the coasts of Europe, from Gibraltar to the North Sea; and in the Mediterranean, Britain can derive but an inconsiderable naval assistance from Sardinia and Naples.

But supposing the territory of the Belligerent Powers to be in extent equal to that of France, the parts of the former are unconnected, while those of the latter are connected; the former therefore are exposed to the perpetual attacks which may be made by an enemy commanding concentrated dominions, in the most fertile and most populous region of Europe.

The contingent which Russia is to furnish by the late treaties, can only be held as a present aid; the naval force, which she has sent to protect the Narrow Seas, proves only the just alarm which the Empress has taken at the naval power of the Dutch having become an accessory to that of France, and of consequence in any future war, that France would be in a situation to oppose, with the assistance of Denmark and Sweden, her rising marine, if not to crush it, even in the Baltic.

2. We have next to make a comparison of the strength (military and naval) of the Belligerent Powers, supposing France to retain her conquests,  
and

and the Allies to be called out, at a future period, for their common defence.

France, during the Monarchy, was supposed to contain twenty five millions\* of inhabitants, the Austrian Netherlands, 1,880,000, the Seven Provinces, about two millions.† It is difficult to make any computation of the inhabitants of those districts, on the side of Italy, or on the banks of the Rhine, which the Republic has formed into departments, or now commands as dependencies, but it would be a low calculation to take them at one million. Supposing then the revolutionary system of the French republic to be at an end, and that France was to retain the countries which have been enumerated, and supposing also, that civilization and the arts of peace were to be restored, France alone, exclusive of Spain (if we admit one-twentieth part of its inhabitants to be mustered in its armies and marine) would possess a force consisting of 1,494,000; if two-thirds of this number shall be allotted to its armies, and one-third to its marine, the armies of Germany, supposing the whole of that disjointed empire to act in concert, would be out-

\* M. Necker, chap. 9. makes the average 24,802,580.

† Zimmerman's Statistics.

num-



numbered ; but, if those of Austria only, which have been computed at 250,000 men, assisted by those of Sardinia, about 30,000, were to act, the force would not bear any proportion, in point of numbers, to that of France ; hence, with resources to support them, the French armies would be irresistible, whether they continued their warfare, *en masse*, or without this barbarous expedient, by the practice of military tactics.

The army of Britain could afford its Allies on the Continent, little, if any aid ; for instead of sending troops to its foreign settlements, the whole would be required for the defence of its own coasts, having, in such a situation, not only the southern part of the Island to protect, but the northern and Ireland to guard against invasions from the Netherlands.

If with this, we compare the naval power of France (supposing it to retain the coasts which have been described) we shall find the result equally against the Belligerent Powers. The sources of naval power are of two kinds, first, what is included under the general term of naval stores ; and next, of seamen trained and formed by an extensive trade.

The possession of the Netherlands, and,  
of

of course, the command of the Scheldt, the Maese and the Rhine, would furnish, independently of any importation, timber, tar, iron, hemp, provisions of every description, &c. sufficient, both for the purposes of trade and of a marine\*; and the internal produce of France and of the Netherlands would afford the commodities, which administer both to the necessaries and luxuries of life; so that, without being exposed to risk, or to the expence of freight, France could of itself furnish an indefinite quantity of materials for its marine.

The possession of a coast, from the Pyrenees to North Holland, and this connected with all the large rivers of Europe which intersect its richest countries, and with the efforts on the one hand, of the most inventive, and on the other of the most laborious of its inhabitants, would, under a government where property should be secure, soon become the nurse of arts, manufactures and of internal and external trade.

Hence the marine of France might command the European Seas, and from the natural ambition of the people, would soon lead them to naval and commercial enterprizes, which might be formidable in the West and in the East Indies.

\* See Part V.

To

To this naval power is to be opposed that of Great Britain and of Russia, supposing the link of connection between the two countries to remain. We must not, in considering the trade and marine of France, reason from the present extensive scale of our own trade and marine, when that of our rival has been either destroyed by themselves, or reduced by us, but we must suppose what our trade and marine would be, after those of France had been restored, in proportion to the extent of its dominions.

In the article of naval stores, we have hitherto, in a great measure, depended on our imports from the Baltic and from America.\* In every former war, our trade to the Baltic has continued to be nearly equal to what it was in peace, because, except in the case of a war with Holland, we have had no enemy to oppose us in the Narrow Seas, the French having no access to them, but from Dunkirk.

We must not, in the same manner, in considering the trade and marine of Britain, reason

\* Flanders, from the most correct observations, could furnish stores twenty per cent. cheaper, than the stores we import from Russia.

from

from their extent, when the number of our seamen has kept pace with our immense coasting trade, and with the magnitude and value of our distant dependencies, and when our navy is in proportion to our trade: we must rather make the comparison, by looking forward to the revival of the trade and marine of our opponent, and to the proportion which both must bear to that of Britain, when this opponent shall be recognized to have the command of the northern coasts of Europe, and of the Mediterranean, or can meet us in the Channel, in the Narrow Seas, and beyond the Streights of Gibraltar.

In this situation, the number of our seamen must decrease, in proportion as the trade of our rival rises, and the scenes in which our navy will have to act be multiplied, in proportion as the fleets of our enemy can be formed in the ports of the Netherlands (Austrian and Dutch), and ready to act against our coasting and Baltic trade, as they have hitherto done in the Channel against our foreign commerce.

3. We have, in the third place, to make a comparison of the resources of France, and of Britain and its Allies.

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The resources of France furnish three distinct aspects, viz.

—What they have been during the present war ;

—What they were at the fall of the Monarchy ; and,

—What they may be, upon the supposition of the arts of peace being restored, and the territories above described included in the French Republic.

The first aspect, being in itself a contradiction to all the arts of peace, may be deemed incompatible with any form of government, or any system of law which protects life and property, or any treaty between France and other independent nations ; it is therefore, in some measure, out of the question, unless the new government of France shall embrace that degree of revolutionary spirit, which may enable its successive rulers again to resort to the seizure of the property of individuals, to the creation of assignats, and to the circulation of them, by the system of terror.

It has been incontrovertibly proved, that the immense resources which were thrown by these means into the hands of the first and  
second

second Assemblies, and of the Convention, were the real causes of the progress of the war : It is true, that immense sums have been obtained from the sale of the crown and church lands, from that of the property, real and personal, of the emigrants, and from that of the property of the merchant, manufacturer, and farmer, which have been seized, professedly, as a fund or security for the assignats, but really to defray the charges of the war, and to support the unprincipled ambition and avarice of the shifting governors of that devoted country.

The resources of France thus were in proportion to the spoils of the kingdom and of the conquered countries : to their immense amount, however, the success of the Republic has been owing, so that now, when they appear to be drying up, or no longer to exist, neither enthusiasm nor the guillotine can enable the rulers of the Republic, for any length of time, to continue hostilities with effect\*.

The second aspect, or what the French resources were at the fall of the Monarchy, furnishes, at least, estimates of the revenue,

\* D'Ivernois's *Curfory View of the Assignats*, (1795.) and *Etat des Finances et des Ressources de la République Française*, (1796.)

which the kingdom paid, while the Monarchy was regular and its territory bounded by the countries which now are included in the dominions of the Republic.

According to Abbé Terray, who was Minister at the accession of Louis XVI. in 1774, the expence for that year was - *liv.* 224,720,000\*  
The receipt - - - 196,901,557

Deficit *liv.* 27,818,443

But the actual increase of expences

was - - - - 12,400,000†

Total Deficit 40,218,443

[Réponse de M. Calonne à l'écrit de M. Necker, p. 64.]

\* Or in pounds sterling.

Expence	-	-	-	£.9,363,333	6	8
Receipt	-	-	-	8,204,231	10	10
				<hr/>		
			Deficit	£.1,159,101	15	10
† Increased expences	-	-		516,666	13	4
				<hr/>		
			Total Deficit	£. 1,675,768	9	2
				<hr/>		

According

According to M. de Clugny, in 1776, the			
expences were §	-	-	<i>liv.</i> 402,574,651*
The receipt	-	-	378,381,069
Deficit			<u>24,193,582</u>

But if to this sum be added			
the amount of the loan made for			
the marine, and paid from the			
finance	-	-	<u>13,000,000†</u>
The total deficit will be	-		<u>37,193,582</u>

According to M. Necker, in the Compte			
rendu, addressed to the King in 1781, the receipt			
for that year was	-	-	<i>liv.</i> 264,154,000‡
The expences	-	-	<u>253,954,000</u>
Surplus			<u>10,200,000</u>

## § Réponse de M. Calonné, p. 67.

* Expences	-	-	-	£.16,773,943	15	10
Receipt	-	-	-	15,765,877	17	6
Deficit				<u>1,008,065</u>	18	4
† Loan	-	-	-	541,666	13	4
Total Deficit				<u>£.1,549,732</u>	11	8
‡ Receipt	-	-	-	£.11,006,416	13	4
Expences	-	-	-	10,581,416	13	4
Surplus				<u>£.425,000</u>	0	0



And the exceedings employed for re-imbursements were § - - *liv.* 17,326,666\*

M. Calonne, in his answer to M. Necker, makes the actual receipt for the

same year †† - - 236,833,000†  
The expences - - 283,162,000

Deficit 46,329,000

Difference in the two accounts, *liv.* 56,529,000‡

viz. Error in the receipt - - 27,321,000

Error in the expences - - 29,208,000

56,529,000

§ Oeuvres de M. Necker, Tom. 3. p. 140.

†† Réponse de M. Calonne, &c. p. 64.

* Exceedings	-	-	-	£.721,944	8	4
† Receipt	-	-	-	£.9,868,041	13	4
Expences	-	-	-	11,798,416	13	4
Deficit				£.1,930,375	0	0
‡ Difference	-	-	-	£.2,355,375		
viz. Error in Receipt	-	-	-	1,138,375		
— in Expences	-	-	-	1,217,000		
Total Deficit				£.2,355,375		

But at the end of M. Necker's administration,  
M. Calonne makes the deficit § *liv.* 70,000,000\*

At the commencement of M. Calonne's  
administration, in November 1783, the deficit  
was †† - - - 80,000,000†

At the close of M. Calonne's administration  
in April, 1787, the expences were 589,184,995‡  
The receipt - - - 474,047,629

Deficit 115,137,366||

§ Réponse de M. Calonne, p. 71 & 78.

†† Ibid. p. 86 & 94.

|| Ibid. p. 95 & Tables 55.

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* Deficit	-	-	-	£.2,916,666	13	4
† Deficit	-	-	-	£.3,333,333	6	8
‡ Expences	-	-	-	£.24,549,374	15	10
Receipt	-	-	-	19,751,984	10	10
Deficit				£.4,797,390	5	0

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According

According to an apperçu drawn up in 1789,			
the receipt for that year was, <i>liv.</i> 640,546,049*			
The expences,	-	-	633,153,041
			<hr/>
Surplus,	-	-	7,393,008§
			<hr/>

Upon these statements, however, we may remark, that though the particular taxes in France were enormous, from the sums laid upon particular commodities, as the gabelle or tax upon salt, and were felt as oppressive by the lower orders of the people, the actual amount of the whole taxes bore no sort of proportion to the property which might have been taxed, even with advantage to the national funds, if these funds had been placed, upon the same broad basis, as those of Great Britain.

The deficiencies above enumerated, though they, in fact, contributed to the fall of the mo-

§ Apperçu de l'Etat de situation des finances de la France, Année 1789, ensemble le résumé de l'étendue de la population, et des contributions de chaque généralité du Royaume.

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* Receipt	-	-	-	£. 26,689,418	14	2
Expences	-	-	-	26,381,376	14	2
				<hr/>		
Surplus	-	-	-	£. 308,042	0	0
				<hr/>		

narchy, will by no means produce a like revolution, if the monarchy shall be restored under a limited character, because, in this case, the exemptions of the nobles, of the churchmen, and of the members of the twelve Parliaments of France would be done away.

Supposing next, that the expenditure of the Republic, from its unnatural resources, should leave it in a state of absolute bankruptcy, and of course, its debts at an end; or supposing, what would be just, an interest only to be paid for the existing debts before the Revolution, when according to Mr. Calonne, the receipt was 474,047,629 livres\*, there would be a sufficient fund for the discharge of interest, as well as for a part of the expences of the government. New taxes would therefore only be required to defray the remainder of the expences of government, if such taxes should be necessary, the exemptions having been done away.

The third aspect proceeds upon the supposition, that the arts of peace shall be restored and the territory of the Republic shall include its present conquests. There are two distinct views which we may take of such resources; one, is

\* £. 19,751,914 10s. 10d.

the application of them for liquidating the debts which would be incurred by realizing the assignats, upon the same principle that America did her paper currency. It does not appear, upon any theory of financial œconomy, even supposing the assignats to be funded, and the lowest possible interest paid for them, that this payment could be practicable, and even supposing it possible, still it would require so long a period to give such funds value, that the revenues, even of their extensive dominions, would leave them but scanty means for disturbing the peace of Europe. Another is, (and, judging from the moral character of the present rulers of France, the most probable,) that the assignats shall be extinguished, and with them the old debts of the monarchy. In this case, the nation would be literally regenerated, and like a discharged bankrupt enter again into business, but upon an immense fund, proportioned to the produce of its large domains.

Let the first taxation be equal only to the expences of the government, and this as low as possible ; let the present rulers be supposed to change their characters, and to become honest men ; the moment the arts of peace shall return and property be protected by law, the revenue, from a country extending over the most rich and fertile part of Europe, could not be estimated at less than

than the old revenue of France, and the old revenue of the conquered countries added to it; hence, without interest of debts to pay, France would have a clear revenue, at the lowest calculation, equal to that of all the Belligerent Powers, and with the advantage, that the revenues of its opponents would be loaded with the interest of the debts which now attach to each nation.

If with these resources of France, taken in any of the three possible aspects in which they can be placed, we contrast the resources of the Belligerent Powers, we shall find the amount of the latter not to bear any proportion to that of the former.

The net revenues of Great Britain may be taken, according to their present amount, at £. 18,500,000

Supposing peace restored, and the manufactures and commerce of this country, in consequence of its being the only nation in Europe possessed of credit, to extend to the utmost possible magnitude, and supposing, from the present state of our trade, the minister's plan of a gradual liquidation of the debt, to proceed at the rate of two or three millions annually, the situa-

tion of the two countries, in point of resources, would by no means balance each other ; for the one would not have the interest of any debt to discharge, and the other the interest of three hundred millions to pay.

Supposing next, that the trade and credit of France should revive, and that, in proportion to the extent of its dominions, Britain not only would have a rival in every market, but the French trade would be established in seas, in which, during peace, it has hitherto been inconsiderable and in war impracticable.

The revenues of Austria, considering the long wars in which it has been engaged during the last ten years, (the accession from Poland being supposed to balance the loss in Flanders,) and the immense debt, which it has incurred, cannot be estimated but as yielding an inconsiderable surplus ; for, from the disjointed situation of its dominions, and from the large military peace establishment which it will have to maintain, we can calculate upon nothing farther than its having no deficit, or an inconsiderable surplus for many years.

The resources of Sardinia are, not only little more than sufficient for its peace establishment, but totally unfit (as has appeared from the subsidy we pay to that crown) for the operations of war.

From

From this comparison, the following inferences obtrude themselves :

1. The territory of France, including its conquests, would not only be more extensive than that of Britain and its Allies, but by its concentrated situation better calculated for offensive and defensive war ; since the Allies from the loss of Flanders, would have no immediate means of uniting their power, and must each maintain a separate war with France, without deriving any military or naval aid from each other.

2. The armies of France would not only be more numerous but more united than those of the Allies, and therefore, whether the former attacked *en masse* or by regular tactics, they must be superior to the latter. The fleets of France would then comprehend not only their former force but that of Holland, and what might be expected from the ports of Flanders, which hitherto have not furnished any share of the naval strength of Europe.

3. The resources of France, upon any of the preceding systems, would be equal to those of the Allies united, and upon the last mentioned, and most probable system, greater and more effectually applicable to war than those of the Allies.

P A R T





## P A R T II.

Review of the Treaties in succession, which have been formed, to create and maintain the Balance of Power in Europe, with the inferences which each Period of these Treaties seems to authorize.

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### C O N T E N T S

Progressive Political Situation of the Powers who have been Parties in the Treaties which created and have maintained the Balance of Power—Of France—Of Germany—Of the Netherlands—Of England—The political Situation of France, the Principle adopted for the Arrangement of the Treaties respecting the Balance of Power—First Period of these Treaties, from 1516 to 1668, with the historical Events which led to them—First Inference from this Period of the Treaties—Proofs illustrative of it from History—Second Inference from this Period of the Treaties—Proofs from History to illustrate it—Second Period of Treaties for preserving the Balance of Power, from 1668 to 1735, with the historical Events which led to them—Barrier of the Netherlands defined—Balance of Power in Europe defined—First Inference from this Period of the Treaties—Illustrations from History—Second Inference from this Period  
of

of the Treaties—Illustrations from History—Third Inference, or rather Chain of Inferences, from this Period of the Treaties.

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THE history of the Powers, who have been parties in the treaties, for maintaining a balance of power in Europe, will best explain the objects and spirit of them. Though the feudal system in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain, terminated in producing different forms of subordination, yet the sovereigns in all these countries proceeded upon the common principle, of maintaining the independence of their dominions, and preserving the resources they derived from trade.

The history of France may be divided, in so far as regards these treaties, into two periods; the one extends from the reign of Francis I. to the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1668, during which the Monarchy was acquiring a fixed character; the other from this treaty, when the Monarchy was consolidated, to its fall in 1789.

The history of Germany may be divided into three periods; the first extending from the reign of Charles V. to the truce with Holland 1612; the second, from this truce to the peace of Westphalia, 1648, during which the contests between  
the

the Powers of the empire, and the exhausted state of their resources led to new plans, for the restoration of their separate rights ; the third, from the preceding treaty to the opening of the present war, during which, France made important acquisitions on the frontier of the empire, viz. in Alsace, Lorraine, Franche Comté, and in Flanders, by directing its politics to excite the leading Powers in Germany to jealousies and wars against each other.

The history of the Netherlands, like that of Germany, may be divided into three distinct periods ;—

The first, extends from the acquisition of the Seventeen Provinces by Charles V. to the rise and independence of the Dutch power, during which, it was the object of England, on the one hand, to keep open its trade with the Netherlands, and to prevent Spain and the Emperor, as sovereigns of the Netherlands, from becoming a predominant power on the continent of Europe ; and, on the other hand, France, from acquiring dominions in Flanders, or on the side of Germany, which might render its political influence paramount, and give it the command of the inhabitants and produce of the Netherlands.

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The second period extends from the truce between Spain and the Dutch, 1612, till Flanders was separated from the crown of Spain, and became an appanage of Austria, during which the same political and commercial system was observed by England, in regard to France, but varied in regard to the Netherlands, by supporting the Dutch against France and Spain, and its own commerce with the Netherlands by successive treaties with the States.

The last period extends from the annexation of Flanders to the House of Austria, to the present time, during which, the general policy has been, to consider the Austrian Netherlands as a barrier against the encroachments of France, and as the means of preventing that monarchy from having a maritime force in the Narrow Seas.

The history of England may also, with a view to these treaties, be divided into three periods :

The first extends from the reign of Henry VIII. to the revolution in Holland, during which the object was to balance the power of France and the Emperor.

The second extends from the first treaty of  
Queen

Queen Elizabeth with the Dutch, to the Revolution, 1688, when its objects fluctuated, as it was more or less under the influence of the French court.

The third extends from the Revolution 1688, to the fall of the French monarchy in 1789, during which, the system has been almost uniform, viz. that of checking the French in their encroachments on the side of Flanders, both as a barrier against their aggrandizement, and as a security for the British trade in the German ocean.

We shall adopt, as a general principle of arrangement, the periods in the French history, viz. from the accession of Francis I. to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1668, when the monarchy was acquiring a fixed character; and from 1668 to 1789, during which, the monarchy was consolidated and fell. In the first of these periods, the treaties had varied objects, but in the last, they had a defined object, both with regard to France and to its opponents. We can thus see the sources, out of which the balance of power arose, trace it, till it became the leading rule of politics; and perceive the adherence to it, as a principle, to have been the true cause of the present war, and the only practical ground upon which, the preliminaries, for the restoration of peace in Europe, can rest or proceed with safety to Great Britain.

The first period of the treaties, for forming a balance of power in Europe, extends from 1516, to 1668, and the following historical facts must be kept in view as the source of them.

Upon the decline of the feudal system, Flanders, in connexion with the Hanseatic league, became a great seat of commerce, to which the produce of the different countries in the north of Europe was carried to be exchanged, partly, for the imports brought to Bruges and Antwerp by the different European nations, and partly, for the produce of the East Indies, which, by caravans and the navigation of rivers, found its way to the shores of the Mediterranean.

While the Netherlands were divided between the Earls of Flanders and the Earls of Holland, &c. as proprietors of the northern districts, which afterwards formed the United Provinces of the Dutch; and while the northern provinces of Germany were subject to lesser princes, viz. Burgundy, Alsace, and Loraine; the power of France did not extend beyond Picardy and Artois, so that the country, now known by the name of French Flanders, formed a part of the domain of the House of Burgundy, and the districts of Alsace and Loraine were integral parts of the German empire.

England

England had no sooner begun its commercial progress than it formed treaties, for the maintenance of an intercourse with the 17 Provinces of the Netherlands, and very early established its staple at Bruges and Antwerp, under privileges granted to it by the Dukes of Burgundy, as Earls of Flanders.\*

The nations of Europe were in this situation when the Emperor, Charles V. by descent became Sovereign of Flanders and Brabant, and by his power and intrigues, of what were termed the 17 Provinces of the Netherlands; at the same time he was King of Spain and Emperor of Germany. These immense dominions and this extensive power excited a natural jealousy in Francis I. whose dominions lay on every side encircled by those of Charles. This jealousy became mutual, and gave rise to the treaties which we shall find first defining (what was afterwards emphatically denominated) the balance of power among the European nations.

Great Britain, at this period, was divided into two distinct sovereignties; England and Ireland, comprehended in the one, were so much more powerful than Scotland, that this last looked to its

\* See Part III.



connexion with France, as the means of preserving its independency ; yet Henry VIII. though alternately duped by Charles and Francis, was enabled to maintain an equilibrium of their power, being in a situation, from his possession of Calais, to attack either the one or the other, and, at the same time, to preserve for his subjects their commercial privileges in the dominions of both these Princes.

After the death of Charles and of Francis, Philip II. who succeeded to Spain and the Netherlands, became less formidable than Charles had been, because the German dominions of Charles had passed to a different branch of the family, and because the reformation in religion had now produced civil commotions in Germany ; the disputes about the succession excited also a civil war in France, and a total change of opinion, respecting religion, formed contending parties in Britain.

It was in this situation of Europe, that the splendid talents of Queen Elizabeth were called forth to display a conduct, respecting France and the Low Countries, which enabled her both to maintain the possession of her throne, and to curb the encroachments of France on the Netherlands, and of Philip II. on the rising power of the Dutch.

Upon

Upon the accession of James to the crown of England the influence of France in Scotland ceased, but the ancient commercial privileges of the Scottish nation in Holland and Zealand remained, and were even strengthened by the connexion of these countries with England. The alliance which Elizabeth had formed with the Dutch enabled James, without efforts, to have a decided influence on all the pretensions of the nations on the Continent, and to maintain his commercial treaties with the Netherlands and with France, but he allowed himself, in general politics, to be the dupe of this last court.

Upon the accession of Louis XIV. the French Monarchy began to be defined. His able Ministers, in succession, not only availed themselves of all the circumstances which could narrow into a pure monarchy the privileges of the provinces in his kingdom, but formed those armies and fleets which were to extend the dominions of the Sovereign, on the side of Germany and of Flanders, and to combat the maritime power of England and of Holland.

An accidental event had already contributed to connect the whole of this political chain. Towards the close of the 16th century, discoveries  
in

in geometry and in astronomy, with what had formerly been known, the use of the mariner's compass, produced equally a spirit of enterprize, and a total change on the commerce of Europe.

The discovery of America, and of the Cape of Good Hope as the route to the East Indies, had opened to Spain and Portugal immense accessions of power and of riches.

The ancient route of the trade, from the Mediterranean to the Netherlands and the Hanse-towns, was therefore gradually abandoned, and Holland, England, and France eagerly sought after advantages in new settlements and a new trade which promised a boundless encrease of their resources and naval strength. At this time the immense territory of France, after Louis XIV had acquired Alsace, Loraine, Franche Comté, and the old barrier of the Netherlands, revived the jealousy of the European States, particularly of the maritime powers, and with it gave more correct views of the balance of power, particularly, as this sovereign attached to his success, pretensions to universal empire.

These preliminary observations will enable us to discover the source of the treaties, which were formed

formed to establish the balance of power in Europe, though it may be better to postpone the definition of that term, 'till it shall arise out of the circumstances which rendered it the principle of the public law of the European nations.

Though it be difficult to separate the treaties under the heads of political and commercial, into which, from the nature of the subject, they seem to divide themselves, the attempt may be made, by keeping in view these objects distinctly.

1516.—Henry VIII. formed a treaty with Charles V. who had succeeded to the sovereignty of the Netherlands. The object of Henry was to strengthen his power in the war which he was undertaking against France.\*

1528.—A treaty was formed between the Emperor Charles, England, and France, for the purpose of guaranteeing their respective possessions, and extending the trade of the Netherlands and of England.†

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, Vol. 13, p. 533.

† Rymer's *Fœdera*, Vol. 14, p. 258,—Philip succeeded Charles in 1555, and the Dutch Revolution happened in 1579, which gave a new character to the treaties, for maintaining the reciprocal relations of the European powers.

1578.—Queen Elizabeth formed her first treaty with the Dutch, or United Netherlands. The object of this politic sovereign was to check the growing power of Spain, which already had threatened the destruction of her kingdom, by having the command of the coasts of the Netherlands, as well as those of Spain, at the same time, that she was equally jealous of the encroachments which France was making on the ancient barrier of Flanders.\*

1609.—A truce was formed between Spain and the States General, recognising the indepen-

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, Vol. 15, p. 784,—The long war, during this period, between Spain and the Dutch, ruined the trade at Antwerp and gave rise to the measure of shutting up the Scheldt, a measure, for which the States General have uniformly contended, as being necessary for the safety of the seats of their trade, while the sovereigns of the Spanish or Austrian Netherlands have acquiesced in the restriction, on account of the aids which they have derived from Holland and from England, in defending their remaining provinces in the Netherlands, and the countries on the French side of the Rhine.

It has been the uniform policy of France, in all its wars, to wrest the Netherlands both from Spain and from the House of Austria, and it has been the object of England to keep them detached from France, both to prevent the increase of the power of her rival, and to preserve her share of the commerce of this inlet to Germany.

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dence of the Dutch; and James I. agreed to supply the States with certain quotas of troops and ships of war.\*

1648.—The treaty of Munster between Philip IV. King of Spain, and the States General of Holland, proceeded upon the same principle with the preceding truce, particularly the shutting up of the Scheldt, and this appears to have been connected with the treaty which Oliver Cromwell entered into with the States in 1645.†

1668.—The treaty of St. Germaine en Laye, between Louis XIV. and Charles II. of England, and the States General of Holland, for procuring a peace between France and Spain, laid the foundation for the acquisitions which the French afterwards made on the side of Flanders, Brabant, Loraine &c. and became the basis of the subsequent treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1668, between

\* Batavia Illustrata, p. 395.

Henry IV. of France, at this juncture, was meditating the seizure of part of the Netherlands, and therefore it became the interest of Spain, to be able to preserve its remaining provinces in Flanders, in order, on the one hand, to be in a situation to keep the Dutch to the terms of the treaty, viz. *uti possidetis*, and on the other, to check the schemes of Henry, on the side of Flanders, Loraine and Alsace.

† Treaties, 1785, Vol. 1, p. 10 and 44.

France and Spain, by which Spain, as sovereign of the Netherlands, ceded to France what had formerly been held as the barrier towns of the Netherlands, viz. Charleroy, Binch, Ath, Douay, Fort Scarpe, Tournay, Oudenard, Lisle, Armentiers, Courtray, Bergues, and Furnes, with all their dependencies, but restored Burgundy, or Franche Comté.\*

The first inference from this period of the treaties, seems to be; that it has been the invariable object of France, to extend her dominions on the side of the Netherlands, and on that part of Germany which commands the navigation of the Rhine, under the impression, that if both could be acquired, she could, on the one hand, restrain the navy and ruin the trade of England, and on the other, from the manner in which power is divided in the German empire, and in the countries bordering on Italy, become the paramount power in Europe.

The following proofs from history will serve to illustrate this inference, and they are drawn from the politics and conduct of the French sove-

\* General Collection of Treaties, Vol. 1, p. 156.

reigns and ministers, during the period in which the preceding chain of treaties was formed.

1. Philip de Commines, in his History of France, recommending the importance of making conquests of the dominions of the House of Burgundy, to Louis XI, who laid the first foundation of the greatness of the French Monarchy, says;  
 “ Those that shall hereafter read this history, will  
 “ wonder, that the English suffered the King to  
 “ take the towns bordering so near upon them,  
 “ namely, Arras, Bolloin, Ardes, and Heden,  
 “ with divers other castles, and to lie so long  
 “ with his camp before St. Omer’s, but the King  
 “ of France, in wisdom and sense, far surmounted  
 “ Edward IV. of England, and as he knew that  
 “ the English were inclined to make war upon  
 “ his realm, he made the servants of their King  
 “ goodly presents, and sent home the Ambassa-  
 “ dors with goodly words and princely rewards,  
 “ notwithstanding that some of them understood,  
 “ that he did this only to win time, the better to  
 “ atchieve his enterprize, in the conquest of the  
 “ Duke of Burgundy’s dominions.”\*

2. The

\* Such was the opinion of an historian who wrote three hundred years ago, and is referred to by Lord Townsend,  
 and



2. The President Jeannin, gave his master Henry IV. of France, the following advice, respecting the peace which was afterwards concluded with Spain at Vervins, in 1598.

- “ The Queen of England, (Elizabeth) will be
- “ always just so much for us, as she ought to be
- “ for reasons of state, and no farther, she desires
- “ the encrease of France in the Low Countries
- “ no more than that of Spain, and therefore her
- “ assistance cannot be depended on, if we continue in the war, in hopes of conquering the
- “ Netherlands from Spain; therefore, if Spain be
- “ suffered to be master of the Low Countries,
- “ and either to keep them for itself or give them
- “ to the Archduke Albert, in marriage with the
- “ Infanta Isabella, France will have to be afraid,
- “ that the ancient alliance between England and
- “ the House of Burgundy, will be renewed, of
- “ which we have formerly felt so many bad effects, therefore she advises the peace with Spain,
- “ that it may be at liberty to conclude this marriage, and thus have for a neighbour, a petty

and Mr. Poyntz in their celebrated Defence of the Barrier Treaty. The proof of this last work, being written by those Ministers, will be found in Tindall's Continuation, Vol. IV. p. 111.—(Note 1.)

“ prince

" prince; if the marriage cannot be accom-  
 " plished and the Infanta given to Albany, he  
 " will not dare to become the King's creature, and  
 " from him little is to be feared, for though  
 " France would have nothing to fear from such a  
 " prince, such a prince would have a great deal  
 " to fear from France."<sup>\*</sup>

3. Sully, the Minister of Henry IV. of  
 France, informs us, " that it was the view of Louis  
 " XIII. and of the Queen Mother, to form a  
 " Spanish match, to obtain the Netherlands, and  
 " that Henry IV. would have done the same thing,  
 " and have married the Infanta of Spain, were she  
 " never so old and ugly, if he could have married  
 " the Low Countries with her."<sup>†</sup>

4. When Spain would not consent to give  
 the Netherlands, as a dowry with the Infanta,  
 Richlieu proposed to the Dutch a partition of the  
 Netherlands, provided they would refuse to make  
 peace with Spain, and join their arms with France;  
 a draft of a treaty was actually made for this  
 purpose in 1635, but the States having discovered  
 what the ambitious views of France aimed at, and

\* Barrier Treaty Vindicated, p. 32. 33.

† Ibid. p. 32.

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 “ the House of Burgundy, will be renewed, of  
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“ prince; if the marriage cannot be accomplished and the Infanta given to Albert, he will not dare to become the King’s enemy, and from him little is to be feared, for though France would have nothing to fear from such a prince, such a prince would have a great deal to fear from France.”\*

3. Sully, the Minister of Henry IV. of France, informs us, “ that it was the view of Lewis XIII. and of the Queen Mother, to form a Spanish match, to obtain the Netherlands, and that Henry IV. would have done the same thing, and have married the Infanta of Spain, were she never so old and ugly, if he could have married the Low Countries with her.”†

4. When Spain would not consent to give the Netherlands, as a dowry with the Infanta, Richlieu proposed to the Dutch a partition of the Netherlands, provided they would refuse to make peace with Spain, and join their arms with France; a draft of a treaty was actually made for this purpose in 1635, but the States having discovered what the ambitious views of France aimed at, and

\* Barrier Treaty Vindicated, p. 32. 33.

† Ibid. p. 52.

that

that the object was, to remove the barrier of the Netherlands, and afterwards to quarrel with them, and continue its conquests; they broke off the negociation, and defeated the intentions of Richlieu by the peace of Munster, 1648.\*

5. Mazarin, who succeeded Richlieu, offered to Spain, to give up all the conquests which France had made in Roussillon and Catalonia, if Spain would either give the Netherlands in exchange, or under the notion of a dowry with the Infanta; and when Spain would not consent to either, France had it excluded from the treaty of Munster, and continued the war against it for twelve years. Mazarin finding that the marriage could not be effected without a renunciation of the Netherlands, advised the marrying the Infanta with such a renunciation, giving as his reason, that the King might, by virtue of such a match, pretend at any time, to the succession to the crown of Spain, and to a right to the Low Countries. The marriage accordingly took place, by the Pyrenean treaty, 1659, by which France obtained considerable acquisitions, and a kind of title to more in the Low Countries.†

\* Barrier Treaty Vindicated, p. 52.

† Ibid. p. 54.

6. Upon the death of Philip IV. of Spain, in 1667, Louis XIV. invaded Flanders in right of his Queen, and all the successive wars in which Europe has been involved, have proceeded upon this claim of France; for, from that time forward, it has been the object of the ministers of the French Court to excite quarrels and rebellions in every part of Europe, particularly in England and Holland, that they might have opportunities to obtain farther cessions in Flanders, Burgundy, Alsace, and Loraine, making it always the price of any treaty, to give up any other conquest, provided in these lines they could extend their dominions. Hence the resentment of Louis XIV. in 1672, against the Dutch, for joining in the triple alliance, and hence the intrigues with Charles II. and James II. to prevent England from supporting the Dutch, till at last the elevation of King William to the throne of England produced the confederacy, to be stated in the next period, between Holland, England, the Emperor and Empire, to resist the encroachments of France.

It was this confederacy which gave rise to what have since been termed, the Whig Opinions, respecting the balance of power in Europe, which opinions, we shall find, have been followed by the succeeding monarchs of the House of Brunswick.

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The second inference from this period of the treaties seems to be ;—

That it has been held to be a principle of political conduct, with the most wise English Sovereigns and Statesmen, and with Parliament, during this period, that the safety of England, in all political and commercial respects, depended on the Netherlands being preserved as a barrier against France, to prevent its obtaining that aggrandizement and power which would endanger the liberties of Europe.—The following proofs from history go to the illustration of this inference :

1. In the early period of the preceding review of treaties, Antwerp was the principal seat of commerce on the continent of Europe ; therefore all the treaties, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, between England and the Netherlands, proceeded upon the importance of that great outlet to our staple, adjusting always the terms upon which the English and Flemish markets could trade. This seems more remarkable towards the close of the sixteenth century, when the civil wars in the Netherlands took place.

2. Queen Elizabeth succeeded to the throne of England at a period when she had, for the preservation

servation of her own power and the independency of her kingdoms, on the one hand, to prevent the House of Austria (into which the weight of Spain was thrown), from becoming predominant; and, on the other, the crown of France from acquiring the command of Europe. She perceived that the attempt of Spain was not so dangerous as that of France, because the other dominions of the former were more remote from England and the Netherlands than those of the latter; but she did not take part with France in its attempts to make conquests in the Low Countries, holding it to be safer, for her own dominions, to encourage a third power, distinct from both, viz. the Dutch, who, in conjunction with England, might be able to lower the power of Spain, without raising that of France, and might, upon occasions, balance either. She wisely saw, that the most severe blow she could give to Spain, was to encourage the Dutch, as this would remove the danger which threatened her own kingdom, from the nearness of so formidable a power; but, at the same time, she guarded against the encroachments of France, foreseeing that their commanding the Narrow Seas would expose the trade of the coast of England to perpetual danger, and its



rising naval power to opposition in seas of which her navy was in possession.\*

That such was the Queen's general policy, appears from a declaration, drawn up at this period (1585) by her Secretary Cecil, and printed and published by her order ;

“ This declaration, we hope, shall of all  
 “ persons abroad be well interpreted, as wee  
 “ knowe it will be of such as are not ledde by  
 “ parcialitie, that upon the often and continuall  
 “ lamentable requests made to us by the universall  
 “ States of the countries of Holland, Zeland,  
 “ Guelders, and other provinces with them  
 “ united, (being desperate of the King of Spayne's  
 “ favours,) &c.†

“ We desire to obtaine by God's favour, three  
 “ special things, 1st. A deliverānce of them from  
 “ warre, by the Spaniardes and Forraines. 2d. A  
 “ restitution of their ancient liberties and govern-  
 “ ment by some christiān peace, and thereby, a  
 “ suretie

\* Lord Townsend's Barrier Treaty vindicated. p. 37 to 38.

† Declaration of the causes mooving the Queene of England, to give aide to the defence of the people afflicted and oppressed in the Lowe Countries.

" suretie for ourselves and our realme, to be free  
 " frōm invading neighbours, and 3d. Our people  
 " to enjoy in those countries their lawful com-  
 " merce and entercourse of friendship and mar-  
 " chandise, according to the ancient usage and  
 " treaties of entercourse, made betwixt our pro-  
 " genitors and the Lordes and Earles of those coun-  
 " tries, and betwixt our people and the people of  
 " those countries."\*

Events, in a short time, farther illustrated this  
 wise procedure. The armies of the league had,  
 in a measure, excluded Henry IV from Brittany  
 and Normandy, and the queen, afraid that these  
 coasts, opposed to England might fall under the  
 influence of the Spanish power, sent troops and  
 money to assist in recovering them to France.  
 She held it, at the same time, to be her interest to  
 keep in balance these contending-parties, 'till the  
 peace of Vervins, between France and Spain, ob-  
 liged her to strengthen her alliance with the Dutch,  
 both to prevent Spain from becoming possessed of  
 a greater share of the Netherlands, than was con-  
 sistent with her views of the independence of Eng-  
 land, and to check France in acquiring ports in  
 Flanders, which might interrupt the commerce of  
 her

\* Declaration of the Causes, &c. p. 19.

her kingdom, and oppose her navy in the Narrow Seas.\*

The impression which this wise policy of Queen Elizabeth had upon France, during the inactive reign of James I. and the unfortunate reign of Charles I. can best be described by Jeannin, in the advice which he gave to Louis XIII;—He says, “ That an alliance with the House of Burgundy was always coveted by the crown of England, for it is their constant interest against France;”—therefore, in 1622, when he considers whether war or peace with Spain and Holland, were most for the interests of his master; he adds, “ As for the King of England, he has no reason to doubt that he would promote a peace between them, upon such and such terms, because that would be in effect to renew the ancient alliance with the House of Burgundy, between Spain, which had succeeded to it, himself and all the Low Countries; an alliance, which the Kings of England have always been fond of, and this the two Kings of England and Spain will think, as useful to them, as it will be prejudicial to

\* Letters of the Queen and her Ministers, preserved in Sir Thomas Edmonds’ negotiations with France and Brussels, from 1592 to 1617, published by Mr. Birch.

“ France,

“ France, there being nothing, which the King  
“ (Louis XIII) ought not to endeavour, to at-  
“ tempt to hinder it.”\*

3. Cromwell, who, under the pretence of liberty, established a most despotic government, was secretly supported by Mazarin, and therefore connived at the French encroachments on the side of the Netherlands, at the very time that the French Court was favoring the restoration of Charles, and yet this very sovereign and James II, after the restoration, were so completely duped by the French ministers, as to endeavour to counteract the opinions of the Parliament, and of the English nation, who, from the wise politics of Elizabeth, were satisfied that their safety depended upon the French being kept out of Flanders, and Spain prevented from crushing the Dutch.

4. In 1676-7, March 10th, the Commons addressed Charles II, representing, “ That the minds  
“ of your Majesty’s people were much disquieted,  
“ with the manifest danger arising to your Majesty’s  
“ kingdoms by the growth and power of the  
“ French King, especially by the acquisitions al-  
“ ready made, and the farther progress likely to  
“ be made by him in the Spanish Netherlands,

\* Letters of the Queen, &c. p. 34.

“ in the preservation and security whereof, we  
 “ humbly conceive, the interest of your Majesty,  
 “ and the safety of your people, are highly con-  
 “ cerned; and therefore we most humbly beseech  
 “ your Majesty, to take the same into your royal  
 “ care, and to strengthen yourself with such  
 “ stricter alliances as may secure your Majesty’s  
 “ kingdoms, and preserve and secure the said  
 “ Netherlands, and thereby quiet the minds of  
 “ your Majesty’s people.\*

When this address went to the Lords for their  
 concurrence, that House wished to connect with  
 it the necessity of preventing the French King  
 from getting possession of Sicily. The Commons  
 rejected the amendment, because “ The special  
 “ mention of Sicily would seem to put less weight  
 “ upon the preservation of the Spanish Nether-  
 “ lands, the conservation of which, the Commons  
 “ conceive to be of much more moment to his  
 “ Majesty’s kingdoms than that of Sicily; for,  
 “ though it may be of great importance to our  
 “ trade, that Sicily be not in the hands of the  
 “ French King, yet the safety of his Majesty’s  
 “ kingdoms is not so immediately endangered

\* Journals, vol. ix. p. 396.

“ thereby,

“ thereby, and therefore ought not to be equally  
 “ insisted upon.”\*

A second address to the same effect, but in stronger terms, was resolved on by the House on the 29th of March 1677, requesting the King to form alliances for this object †; A third, upon the 13th of April ‡; A fourth, upon the 16th §; A fifth, upon the 25th of May, intreating the King to enter into a league, offensive and defensive, with the States, for the preservation of the Netherlands ||; A sixth, upon the 31st January following \*\*; A seventh, upon the 15th of March, with a resolution, that if his Majesty would be pleased immediately to declare, and enter into actual war against the French King, the Commons would stand by him, and assist his Majesty “ with plentiful supplies.” †† An adjournment however took place, and the Dutch were forced into the treaty of Nimeguen, which left a great part of Flanders in possession of the French.

\* Journals, vol. ix. p. 400.

† Ibid. p. 408.

‡ Ibid. p. 419.

§ Ibid. p. 423.

|| Ibid. p. 425.

\*\* Ibid. p. 430.

†† Ibid. p. 455.

The Commons, on the 4th of May, 1678, came to resolutions still more strong, viz. “That  
 “ it is the opinion of this House, that his Majesty  
 “ be humbly advised and desired forthwith to  
 “ enter into present alliances and confederations with the Emperor and King of Spain, and  
 “ the States General of the United Provinces, for  
 “ the vigorous carrying on of the present war  
 “ against the French King, and for the good and  
 “ safety of his Majesty’s kingdoms ; and particularly, that effectual endeavours be used for continuing the States General in the present confederation ; and that it be agreed by all the parties confederated, to prohibit all trade between  
 “ their subjects and countries, and France, and all  
 “ other the dominions of the French King ; and  
 “ that no commodities of France, or any of the  
 “ dominions of the French King, be imported  
 “ into their countries from any place whatsoever ;  
 “ and also, that all endeavours be used to invite  
 “ all other Princes and States into the said confederation ; and that no truce or peace be made  
 “ or agreed to with the French King, by his Majesty or any of the confederates, without general  
 “ consent first had thereto.”\*

\* Journals, vol. ix. p. 475.

On the 6th the King returned for answer ;—  
 “ His Majesty having been acquainted with the  
 “ votes of this House, of the 4th instant, was  
 “ very much surprised both with the matter and  
 “ form of them : But if his Majesty had had ex-  
 “ ception to neither, yet his Majesty having asked  
 “ the advice of both Houses, does not think fit  
 “ to give any answer to any thing of that nature,  
 “ ’till he hath a concurrent advice from both  
 “ Houses.”\*

On the 7th the Commons resolved, “ That  
 “ an humble address be presented to his Majesty,  
 “ that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to  
 “ give a speedy answer to the last address presented  
 “ to his Majesty from this House, of the 4th of  
 “ May instant ;” and, “ That an address be pre-  
 “ sented to his Majesty to remove the Duke of  
 “ Lauderdale from his councils and presence.”†

On the 27th the Commons again addressed  
 the King, stating, that they conceived, “ That  
 “ the present inconveniences and dangers, under  
 “ which the kingdom now lies, might either to-  
 “ tally, or in a great measure, have been prevented,

\* Journals, vol. ix. p. 476.

† Ibid. p. 477.



“ if your Majesty had accepted of that advice,  
 “ which in all humility and faithfulness, we pre-  
 “ sented to your Majesty, upon the twenty-sixth of  
 “ May last; and which we re-iterated to your  
 “ Majesty, upon the one and thirtieth of January  
 “ ensuing: The refusing of which advice, and  
 “ dismissing of the Parliament, in May last, was  
 “ the occasion of those ill consequences which  
 “ have succeeded, both at home and abroad; all  
 “ which hath arisen from those misrepresentations  
 “ of our proceedings, which have been suggested  
 “ to your Majesty, by some particular persons, in  
 “ a clandestine way, without the participation and  
 “ advice, as we conceive, of your Council Board,  
 “ as though we had invaded your Majesty’s prero-  
 “ gative of making peace or war; whereas we did  
 “ only offer our humble advice, in matters wherein  
 “ the safety of the kingdom was concerned;  
 “ which is a right was never yet questioned, in the  
 “ times of your royal predecessors, and without  
 “ which, your Majesty can never be safe; upon  
 “ which grounds your Majesty was induced to  
 “ give us such answers to those two addresses, re-  
 “ jecting our advice, as thereby your Majesty’s  
 “ good subjects have been infinitely discouraged,  
 “ and the state of your Majesty’s affairs reduced  
 “ to a most deplorable condition: We do there-  
 “ fore

“ fore most humbly desire, that for the good and  
 “ safety of this kingdom, and the satisfaction of  
 “ your subjects, your Majesty would graciously be  
 “ pleased to remove those counsellors who advised  
 “ the answers to our addresses of the six and twen-  
 “ tieth of May, and the one and thirtieth of  
 “ January last, or either of them.

“ And we do further most humbly desire your  
 “ Majesty, favourably to accept this our humble  
 “ petition and address, as proceeding from hearts  
 “ entirely devoted to your Majesty’s service ; and  
 “ that as we have never yet failed of giving testi-  
 “ monies of our affection and loyalty to your  
 “ Majesty’s person and government, so your  
 “ Majesty may rest confidently assured, that we  
 “ shall never be wanting to support your Majesty’s  
 “ greatness and interest, whilst your Majesty relies  
 “ upon our councils ; which can have no other  
 “ end than what sincerely tends thereunto, notwith-  
 “ standing any sinister or self-interested endeavours  
 “ to make impressions in your Majesty to the  
 “ contrary.”\*

\* Journals, vol. ix. p. 479.—

After this address the House repeated its request, for  
 the removal of the Duke of Lauderdale, *ibid.* p. 480.

**On**

On the 23d the King informed the House,  
 “ That he was resolved, as far as he was able, to  
 “ save Flanders, either by a war or a peace, which  
 “ way soever he should find most conducing to-  
 “ wards it; and that must be judged by circum-  
 “ stances as they play from abroad.”\*

On the 28th the King informed the House,  
 “ That the most Christian King hath made such  
 “ offers for a cessation, ’till the 27th of July, as  
 “ His Majesty does not only believe will be ac-  
 “ cepted, but does also verily believe will end in  
 “ a general peace.”†

The King farther acquainted the House, that a  
 peace between Spain and Holland had taken place;  
 but, when too late, informed it, that he believed,  
 the House would give a greater sum than he asked,  
 for supporting the army, “ rather than the single  
 “ town of Ostend should be in the French hands,  
 “ and forty of their men of war in so good a  
 “ haven, over against the river’s mouth.”‡

The French, after the peace, resolved to keep  
 the places they had agreed to restore in the Nether-  
 lands, till those taken by Sweden should be restored,  
 though this last circumstance had not been mention-  
 ed, either in the preliminaries or in the treaty.§

\* Journals, vol. ix. p. 481.

† Ibid. p. 484.      ‡ Ibid. p. 499.      § Ibid. p. 502.

James II. followed the same obsequiousness to the court of France which Charles had done, and in the subsequent detail of the treaties, we shall find this conduct one of the principal sources of the revolution.

The opinion of Lord Townsend and Mr. Poyntz, forms the best commentary on these events ; “ To have a good barrier against France  
 “ in the Netherlands, is as necessary for us as it  
 “ is, to preserve a balance of power on the con-  
 “ tinent, and to prevent all Europe’s being en-  
 “ flaved by France ; for the situation of the Ne-  
 “ therlands is such, with respect to Holland and  
 “ the Empire, and even to Britain itself, that if  
 “ France be once suffered to get possession of them,  
 “ it will not be in the power of all Europe to set  
 “ any bounds to the progress of her arms.”\*

The second period, in which we have to view the question, respecting the Netherlands as a barrier, to prevent France from its fixed plan of making conquests in Flanders, and on the German empire towards the Rhine, extends from the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1668, to the fall of the monarchy in 1789.

At the opening of this period, Louis XIV. got possession of what was considered to be the ancient

\* Barrier treaty vindicated, p. 23.

barrier of Flanders, viz. the line of fortified towns from Cambray to Dunkirk, and also of several strong towns on the French side of the Rhine, in Burgundy, Loraine, and Alsace, viz. Metz, Straßburg, &c. by which means the monarchy of that conqueror was consolidated.

1676-7.—The Parliament of England, we have seen addressing Charles II. to form a treaty of defensive alliance with the States General, specifying the contingents each nation was to furnish, in case of an attack.

This was followed by the treaty of alliance of the Hague, 1678 ; and this again by the treaty of Nimeguen between France and Spain, in the same year, by which France restored Charleroy, Binch, Ath, Oudenard and Courtray to Spain, but retained the countries to the verge of Menin and the town of Condé,\* and the same year, the treaty of Nimeguen, between the Emperor and the King of France, by which the latter obtained Straßburgh, and the adjoining districts on the Rhine.†

1685.

\* Collection of treaties, vol. i. p. 218.

† Sir William Temple, in a letter to Lord Arlington, in 1669, says ; That within two years after, if the King of France was well possessed of those provinces, he doubted, no Prince or  
state

1685.—James II. formed a treaty with the United Provinces, in confirmation of the treaty of alliance and commerce in 1668, of the treaty of peace 1674, of the treaty 1677-8, and of the two treaties 1678, but secretly violated the whole, under the impression, that Louis XIV would assist him in his plan of becoming absolute.

1686.—This propensity led James, in the following year, to form a treaty with Louis XIV. which was considered by the Emperor, Spain and Holland to be detrimental to the common defence of Europe.

It was this treaty which led to the measure of sending the Prince of Orange to England, the effect of which first appeared in the resolution of the States to assist the Prince with an army and a fleet. For this conduct they assign the following reason, among others, in their resolution, dated 28th October, 1688.—“ That the States would thereby be put in a condition to concur in what

state in Christendom, would pretend to dispute with him, any more than the Spaniards did then, and this was an event which, in his opinion, deserved to be a little more thought on, than it was.†

† Barrier treaty vindicated, p. 56.

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shall

shall be for the common defence of Christendom.”\*

1689.—Soon after the accession of King William and Queen Mary, the Dutch declared war against France on the 9th of March.† England agreed to furnish the States with a fleet and an army on the 29th of April ; Spain declared war against France on the 3d of May;‡ King William declared war on the 7th of May; and these declarations were followed by the grand alliance between the Emperor, Spain, the States General, and King William, for the common defence. This treaty proceeds upon the circumstance of the French King having attacked his Imperial Majesty's dominions in

\* Collection of Treaties Vol. 1 p. 256.

Charles had uniformly, though secretly, acted as the instrument of Louis XIV. in contradiction to the resolutions of Parliament ; which, in 1678, offered to raise money by a poll, to enable the King to declare war against France ; and assigned, as its motive, the preventing Louis XIV. from making farther encroachments on the Spanish Netherlands ; and at the same time it prohibited the importation of French Wines, &c.

James II. in 1686, the first of his reign, though he had, in the end of the preceeding year, formed an alliance with the States, yet concluded the treaty above mentioned.

† Collection of Treaties Vol. 1. p. 256

‡ Declaration published at Bruffels.

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the Netherlands, as well as those of the States General. The contracting parties agreed not to lay down their arms, till a peace could be obtained, on the footing of the treaties of Westphalia, of Osnaburg, Munster, and the Pyrenees.\*

1697.—The war continued to this period, when the treaty of Ryswick† was formed, between England and France; soon afterwards, at the same place, the treaty between France and Holland; in the same year also, that between Spain and France, and between the Emperor and France.‡

1700.—The treaty between France, Great Britain, and the States General was formed, for settling the succession to the Crown of Spain.§

1701.—So little was the faith of France to be depended upon, and so obvious the intentions of

\* The treaty was signed at Vienna May 12th, 1689, and acceded to by Britain December 9th of the same year. See Collection of Treaties Vol. 1. p. 286.

† The first partition treaty.

‡ Collection of Treaties, Vol. 1. p. 407.

It was at this period, agreed, that the Crown of Spain should pass to a branch of the Bourbon family, and the Low Countries to Austria.

§ The second partition treaty.

Collection of Treaties, Vol. 1. p. 407.



Louis XIV. to make farther conquests in the Netherlands, and on the German empire, situated on the French side of the Rhine, that the second grand alliance between the Emperor, England, and Holland was settled, with the avowed object, on the part of the Emperor, of stopping the progress of the French in both these lines of conquest, and of England and Holland, of preserving the Low Countries, which the former considered, in the hands of France, to be inconsistent with its maritime power and commerce, and the latter, with its independence\*.

1702.—The death of King William, at this juncture, did not alter the system of defence against the encroachments of France; on the one hand, the object of the Emperor was, to assert the rights of the House of Austria to the crown of Spain and the Netherlands, on the other, that of England and Holland was, by protecting the confines of the German empire and the Netherlands, to preserve the trade and navy of Great Britain and of Holland, from the attacks of France, or Spain in the Narrow Seas†.

1709 —The victories of the Duke of Marlborough led to the treaty of the Hague, signed the

\* Collection of Treaties, 1785, Vol. 1. p. 326.

† General Collection of Treaties, Vol. 3 & 4.

29th of October, or what has been termed, by way of distinction, the Barrier Treaty, in which the preliminary articles to the treaties of a general peace were agreed upon, between the allies and France\*.

1713.—After the fall of the Whig Ministers of Queen Anne, and the introduction of their opponents, notwithstanding the conquests of Marlborough, the Peace of Utrecht was agreed on, which left France in possession of the principal barrier towns, in what has been termed French Flanders, reserving however, a considerable barrier in the Netherlands to the Dutch.

1714.—The Emperor, by the treaty of Rastadt, acquiesced in that of Utrecht, and by the treaty of Baden, the Emperor and the Empire acceded to it.

1715.—The accession of George I. restored the politics of King William, the great object

\* As all the arguments for and against this treaty, drawn up by Lord Townsend and Mr. Poyntz, apply with equal force to the subsequent treaties, which proceeded upon this of 1709, we shall throw them into the form of general observations, at the conclusion of the period we are reviewing.

of which and of the Whig interest had been, to check the growing power of France on the side of the Netherlands and of Germany, or in other words, to maintain a balance of power between that monarchy, England, Holland and the Empire. Upon this principle, the treaty of Antwerp was formed, with the Emperor Charles VI. to maintain the protestant succession to the crown of England, and to procure the restitution of the Spanish Netherlands to the Emperor, with a reserve of a strong barrier in them to the Dutch.

1716.—A treaty of mutual defence, upon the same principle, was concluded between the Emperor Charles VI. and George I.

1718.—A convention was held between the Emperor, Great Britain, Spain and the United Provinces, for the explanation and execution of certain articles of the barrier treaty 1709.

1731.—A treaty of peace and alliance was formed, between the Emperor, George II. and the United Provinces, upon the basis of the treaty of Utrecht.

1748.—The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, between Britain, France, and the States General, proceeded.

proceeded upon the same principle, reciting the treaty of Westphalia as its basis.

1763.—Though Austria had taken part with France, in the war which preceded the treaty of Paris of this year, and though, of course, the barrier of the Netherlands, and the treaties with the Dutch remained entire, yet, in so far as regarded these important objects, the treaty proceeded upon the basis of that of Utrecht, of that of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, and of that of Westphalia.

1783.—Notwithstanding the part which Holland took with France, in assisting the British colonies in America, yet the treaty of general peace, in this year, with both countries, proceeded upon the basis of that of Utrecht, that of Aix-la-Chapelle, that of Paris, and that of Westphalia.

1788.—The defensive alliance between Britain and the States General referred to the same treaties.

1793.—A convention was made between Britain and Prussia, for the purpose of recovering the territories which France had conquered,  
or

or might conquer, from the Allies of either Power.\*

1794.—A treaty to the same effect was made between these Powers, specifying a subsidy to be paid to Prussia, with the same objects of checking the further encroachments of France ; and, at the same time, a treaty between Britain and the States General, specifying the proportion of the subsidy which each Power was to pay.†

1795.—After Prussia had broken its engagements, stipulated in the preceding treaties, a convention was made between Britain and the Emperor of Germany, by which the former guaranteed a loan raised by the latter, to enable the contracting Powers to recover the conquests made by France.‡

Since the date of this convention, offensive and defensive alliances against France, for the purpose of restoring the liberties of Europe, have been formed by Britain, Austria, and Russia, specifying the contingent which each Power is to furnish.

\* See Treaty signed at Mayence, 14th July, 1793.

† Both Treaties signed at the Hague, 19th April, 1794.

‡ This Convention was signed at Vienna, 4th May, 1795.

Before stating the inferences which the preceding treaties authorise, it may be proper to explain terms which have been unhappily warped with political prejudices, and therefore, in the present moment, seem to have become obsolete. Such are Barrier of the Netherlands, and Balance of Power in Europe.

By Barrier of the Netherlands, it is to be understood, that force, stationed in a line of fortifications, which has been required, in successive ages, to prevent France from obtaining the command of the countries, from the Pyrenees to the German Ocean, and from the ancient limits of France to the Rhine. As this force could only be assembled, by the union of the sovereigns of the countries, on the confines of France, aided by Britain and Holland, it has, and ever must be the interest of each and of the whole, to have it in readiness, for preventing the aggrandizement of a power, the internal resources of which, have been found equal to those of the whole of the allies united.

By Balance of Power is meant, the combining the force of the nations surrounding France, in such a manner, as to throw it into one scale, while that of France was placed in the other, so that the

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Independency of the contracting powers might be maintained.

A first inference, from the preceding treaties, seems to be;—that the conduct of France, in the concessions made by Louis XIV. in the Barrier Treaty, 1709, proceeded from the difficulty in which he found himself, in prosecuting the war; for the treaty had scarcely been ratified, when that Monarch renewed his scheme of conquest in the Low Countries, and obtained from the last Ministers of Queen Anne, the terms which appear in the treaty of Utrecht;—that the Ministers of Louis XV. followed up the politics of his predecessor, by fomenting rebellions in Great Britain, and by forming parties in Holland, to overturn the established constitution; connecting with these measures the plan of seizing on the British settlements in America, and in the East and West Indies;—And that the Ministers of Louis XVI. proceeded upon the same politics, when they acknowledged the independence of America, till the approaching dissolution of the French Monarchy, compelled them to recede, in 1787, from their plan of overturning the Dutch government, and of leaving the Austrian Netherlands only, between their own armies, on the one side, and the Dutch mal-con-

tents,

tents, on the other. In illustration it may be recollected ;—

—That the peace of Utrecht obliged the Allies to accede to terms, by no means corresponding to the success of the war which preceded the negotiation ;—

—That the rebellion excited in Great Britain, in 1715, was not intended by France to second the views of the Pretender, but to weaken Britain, and prevent it from acting in the Netherlands —

—That the war of 1744, which terminated in the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, was a continuation of the same perfidious French politics ; for, during this war, France leagued with Prussia for the purpose of diverting, by a war in the Empire, Austria from defending the Netherlands ; and excited at the same time the rebellion of 1745 in Great Britain, to disable England and Holland from giving effectual support to the defence of the barrier ;—

—That the attack, in 1755, upon the British settlements in America, connected with the scheme of acquiring territorial power in India, and the invasion of Germany, though the politics of France were the reverse of what they had been, in the preceding war in regard to Austria, yet



proceeded upon the idea of depressing the power of Great Britain and its Allies, trusting to future negotiations with the Imperial Court, for concessions on the side of Flanders;—

—That the peace of Paris, in 1763, having frustrated all those schemes, the attempt was again renewed of weakening Britain, by assisting her revolted colonies in 1777; a circumstance which, while it drew on, first, the embarrassment, and next, the fall of the Monarchy, did not check France, from an attempt to excite a revolution in Holland in 1787; so that while the power of the Monarchy remained, though lesser political schemes might seem to mark its progress, the great and invariable object was the destruction of the barrier of the Netherlands, as the sure means of destroying that balance of power, which had hitherto preserved the independence of the European nations.

A second inference, from these treaties, seems to be; that the politics of King William have been followed by his successors, on the throne of England, of preserving the Netherlands, not only as the barrier of the liberties of Europe, but as necessary for the safety of the British trade, and the superiority of its naval power in the Narrow Seas.

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In illustration, it may be recollected;—  
 That the treaties which have been referred to,  
 viz. that of Ryswick in 1697; the partition  
 treaty 1698; the treaty of alliance and the second  
 partition treaty in 1700; the treaty of alliance  
 between the Emperor, Great Britain, and the States  
 General; that between Great Britain, Denmark,  
 and the States General in 1701, into which  
 grand alliance Portugal was admitted in 1703; and  
 the barrier treaty 1709, all proceeded upon the  
 same grounds; and that the treaties made since this  
 last period, for maintaining the independency of  
 the European nations, admit of the following de-  
 fences, as offered by Lord Townsend and Mr.  
 Poyntz, for the Barrier Treaty;—

—That they were necessary, because they se-  
 cured the Protestant succession to the throne of  
 Britain, and the constitution established by the Re-  
 volution, without lessening the independency of  
 the crown of Great Britain;—

—That they were necessary, because it was the  
 true interest of Britain, in particular, both in a politi-  
 cal and commercial view, to have a barrier against  
 the encroachments of France, on the side of the  
 Netherlands; and for Britain, Austria, and Hol-  
 land, in common, that the protection of this  
 barrier

barrier should be entrusted, more immediately, to the Dutch, because their political and commercial interests were involved in its preservation ; and because, by this system of the defence of a distant possession, Germany had a strong outwork to the frontier of the empire, and Britain an equally strong outwork to its commerce in the Narrow Seas.

The treaty of Utrecht in 1713, as has already been mentioned, proceeded from the Tory Ministry of Queen Anne ; but George I. had no sooner ascended the throne of England, than he followed up the politics of King William, respecting France ; hence the treaty of 1715 between the Emperor, Spain, Great Britain, and the United Provinces ; hence the convention and treaty of alliance of 1718, for the execution of the articles of the barrier treaty, hence the treaty between Great Britain, the Emperor and Holland in 1731, and the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, and hence the definitive treaty between England, France and Spain in 1763.

It is difficult to account for the conduct of France, of Holland, and of Spain, in the treaties with America, which they formed against Britain, in the war which terminated in 1783, in any other way,  
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in so far as respects France, than as a continuation of the scheme of humbling Britain, as the only power which could prevent that plan of conquest and aggrandizement in Europe, which we have seen marking the conduct of that country for three centuries ; and in so far as regards Holland and Spain, but as the harbinger of that ruin which has overtaken the one, and of that apathy and humiliation which is foreboding of the fate of the other.

A third inference, or rather chain of inferences from these treaties, seems to be ;—

That by the convention between England and France in 1787, the constitution of the United Netherlands was restored, and the barrier of Austrian Flanders preserved ;—

—That in 1789, when the French monarchy fell, Austria, from affinity to the devoted family which had been dethroned, and all Europe, from horror at the series of crimes in France, considered the conduct of that people to be as atrocious, as it was new in the history of mankind ;—

—That Great Britain did not interfere, even while the French armies over-ran the barrier of the Netherlands, till such time as the new Republic

public had avowed its intention, and actually began offensive measures against Holland ;—

That the opinion of the British Nation and of Parliament was almost unanimous for active measures, to check the conquests of France, will be admitted. For though France had changed its form of government, it steadily persevered in its plan of adding to the French dominions, the Netherlands from Dunkirk to the German Ocean ; extending its limits on the side of Rouffillon and Catalonia, and making the Rhine its frontier towards Germany ; possessions, which at once would give to it the command of the navigation of that river, and of the Scheldt and the Maese, would stretch its frontier towards Italy, beyond the Alps, would give it the command of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and thus destroy that balance of power, by which the independence of the European nations has hitherto been maintained.

P A R T III.

Review of the Treaties which have established the commercial Intercourse of Great Britain with the Netherlands, and thrown the Balance of Trade in its favor.

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C O N T E N T S.

Commercial Treaties arranged according to their effects on the political Situation of Great Britain—Commercial Treaties between Flanders and England—First Inference from these Treaties—Historical illustrations of it—Second Inference—Historical illustrations—Commercial Treaties between Great Britain and Holland—Commercial Intercourse between the Dutch and Scotch Nations ;—Commercial Treaties between Great Britain and Holland continued—First Inference, with Illustrations—Second Inference, with Illustrations.

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HAVING, in the introduction to the preceding branch of this research, detailed the leading facts, in the history of the sovereignties which were the parties in the following commercial treaties, it is

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here only necessary to arrange them, as they were more or less of importance to Great Britain.

Under this principle, we shall first mark the general characters of the commercial treaties with Flanders and Holland; and next draw the inferences which these treaties authorize, both as they regard the trade of Europe, and the balance of trade with the Netherlands which has hitherto been in favor of Great Britain.

#### F L A N D E R S.

The feudal governments of Europe had no sooner begun to encourage the useful arts, by granting privileges, for certain subsidies, to the towns which had become seats of trade, than the Netherlands, from their relative situation to Germany, France, and Britain, and to the countries bordering on the Baltic, became an emporium.

Antwerp, situated on a navigable river, and Bruges, on the confines of France, were the principal trading towns of the Netherlands and members of the Hanseatic League. The vicinity of the coasts of the Netherlands to those of England produced, at a very early period, a profitable intercourse

intercourse between them, to confirm which, reciprocal privileges were conferred by the sovereigns of both countries.

1274—Edward I. of England, formed a commercial alliance with Guy Earl of Flanders, a transaction the more memorable, from its having brought the Flemish artificers in woollens to resort to England, and from its having given to our staple a decided superiority.\*

1338.—Edward III. of England formed a treaty with the Earl of Flanders, by which the staple of English wool was fixed at Bruges, to the mutual advantage of the English and Flemish merchants. This treaty was followed by frequent conventions between the two countries, affording mutual privileges to the inhabitants; such as fishing on each other's coasts, &c.†

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ii. p. 32.

† Ibid. vol. v. p. 38.

Antwerp had, by this time, established its trade with the Italian republics of Venice and Genoa, by which it exported the wool of England, manufactured in Flanders, to the Mediterranean, and imported the produce of the East-Indies, to be diffused over the north of Europe. Anderson's *History of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 341.



This treaty from its bringing no new privileges to the Flemish Merchants, was termed, *intercurfus malus*.\*

1520.—Henry VIII, renewed the treaty 1495, and had it established, that the English merchants should enjoy a free trade in the Netherlands, in all manner of merchandize, and should not pay any other duties than those established by the treaty 1446†.

1528.—A truce was agreed on between England, France, and the Emperor; among the stipulations of which, was a freedom of fishing on the coasts of both countries, and new exemptions to the English trade in the Netherlands; these privileges were to extend to the Spanish islands in the Mediterranean, and to the English islands situated near its coasts‡.

1578.—Queen Elizabeth formed her first treaty with the Dutch, or States-General of the United Netherlands. The commercial object of this wise Princess was equally to check the growing power of Spain and France, while through

\* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 132.

† Ibid. p. 714.

‡ Ibid. Vol. xiv. p. 258.

Holland and Zealand she kept open the trade of her subjects with Germany.\*

During the civil wars, the commercial intercourse with Flanders was interrupted and abridged.—From revenge for the assistance given the Dutch, the Spanish governors, sometimes by proclamations, prohibited the importation of English cloths and merchandize; at other times, they allowed these articles to be imported, but under severe restrictions and duties. The Queen, by seeming to take part with Spain, wherever its interest was opposed to France, got temporary privileges for her subjects in the Netherlands, and by seeming to take a different line, in French Flanders, she kept open the English trade with France.

1604.—A treaty was settled at London, between James I. and Philip III. King of Spain, and the Archduke and Dukes, Albert and Isabella, by which the merchants of each of these countries regained their ancient privileges, upon the payment of the old established duties†.

\* Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xv. p. 784.

† Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi. p. 579.

This is the first English treaty, in which we find the privileges of the Scotch merchants, in the Netherlands, mentioned.

1630.—Charles I. formed the treaty of Madrid with Philip IV. of Spain, by which the privileges of the merchants of England, Spain, and the Netherlands, under certain restrictions, were confirmed\*.

1667.—Charles II. formed a treaty with Spain, in which, Article XX. regards the Netherlands, and is in the following terms:—" And to  
" the end that all impediments be taken away,  
" and that the merchants and adventurers of the  
" kingdoms of Great-Britain be permitted to  
" return to Brabant, Flanders, and other the  
" provinces of the Low-Countries, under the jurisdiction of the King of Spain; forasmuch as  
" it hath been thought convenient that all and  
" any the laws, edicts, and acts, by which the  
" importation of cloth, or any other woollen  
" manufactures of what kind soever, dyed or undyed, milled or unmilled, into Flanders or  
" other provinces, hath been prohibited, be re-

mentioned.—Collection of Treaties published in 1732, vol. ii. p. 131—146.

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. xix. p. 219.

From this treaty it would appear, that the object of Philip was to detach Charles from his connection with the Dutch, as Spain did not finally acknowledge the independence of the States till the treaty of Munster, 1648.

" voked

“ voked and annulled; and that if any right,  
 “ tribute, imposition, charge, or money, hath  
 “ been, with permission or otherwise, put upon  
 “ cloths, or any of the aforesaid woollen manu-  
 “ factures so imported, (except the ancient tri-  
 “ bute upon every piece of cloth, and propor-  
 “ tionably upon every other woollen manufac-  
 “ ture, agreeable to the ancient treaties and agree-  
 “ ments between the then Kings of England, and  
 “ the Dukes of Burgundy and Governors of the  
 “ Low-Countries,) the same shall be alt ogether  
 “ void; and no such tribute or imposition from  
 “ henceforth imposed or put upon the said cloths  
 “ or manufactures, for any cause or pretext what-  
 “ soever.—And that all the English merchants,  
 “ trading in any of the said provinces, should  
 “ enjoy all the privileges, exemptions, immuni-  
 “ ties, and benefits, which formerly have been  
 “ agreed and given by the aforesaid ancient trea-  
 “ ties and agreements, between the then Kings of  
 “ England and the Dukes of Burgundy and Go-  
 “ vernors of the Low-Countries, &c.\*”

1713.—A convention, for a provisional re-  
 gulation of trade in the Netherlands, was concluded  
 at Utrecht†.

\* Chalmers's Treaties, vol. ii. p. 16.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 205.

1715.—Upon a complaint by the British Minister, that the English commerce in the Netherlands was obstructed by the high duties laid upon coarse woollen cloths, the Imperial Minister, for the barrier at Antwerp, consented to the reduction of these duties, but in all other respects insisted, that the commerce of Britain with the Austrian Netherlands should remain under the existing regulations, till the two powers could agree upon a treaty of commerce.

This convention was further explained by an agreement, in which the States General were included; and it was stipulated, that the goods of English merchants passing through the Dutch Netherlands into the Austrian, and *vice versa*, should pay no other duties than upon the then footing, and that no alteration should be made, until it should be otherwise appointed by a treaty of commerce, to be negotiated as soon as possible.

Though in the defensive alliance, 1716, in the quadruple alliance, 1718, and in the convention between Britain, the Emperor, and the States General, of the same year, commercial articles, regarding the trade of the Austrian Netherlands are referred to; and though in the treaty of Vienna, 1731, the Ostend East-India Company, at the requisition

requisition of Britain, was suppressed, it does not appear that any farther steps of importance were taken, to settle regulations for the trade between England and the Netherlands, till the year 1737, when Commissioners were appointed on the part of the Emperor, England and Holland, to meet at Antwerp, for the purpose of framing commercial regulations. They continued their deliberations from this time to 1742, when the death of the Emperor, Charles VI. terminated the conference. In the various projects and schemes proposed by the Commissioners of the Emperor, for establishing the tariffs of England and Holland, for goods in their transit through Austrian Flanders, and for placing the trade upon the footing of ancient treaties, nothing decisive could be done, because the Dutch Commissioners sought only to gain time and to raise difficulties.

1752—Commissioners were again appointed to open a conference at Brussels, and with similar objects. This conference continued for some months, but as the Dutch and English Commissioners demanded the entire execution of the barrier treaty, viz. the payment of the subsidies due to Holland,

and the reduction of the duties to the ancient tariff, it terminated in March 1753.

No further negotiation appears to have been opened, respecting the trade between England and the Austrian Netherlands, so that it remained upon the footing of the ancient treaties, as they were explained by the treaty with Spain, 1667, and continued by the treaty, 1715.

From these treaties, a first inference seems to be;—that the Austrian Netherlands, since the earliest period of commerce in Europe, have been considered, by all neighbouring nations, to be a valuable inlet to trade, and a coast which could have sent fleets to dispute with England the command of the Narrow Seas; and that the trade of England, particularly in its staple of woollens, has maintained its markets in Flanders and the countries bordering upon it, by means of the privileges which its merchants enjoyed in the Netherlands, both before the shutting up of the Scheldt, and since that period, through that branch of the Maese which has its openings towards Zealand and Holland.

In illustration it may be observed;—  
That Antwerp, in 1560, about eighteen years  
before

before the revolution in the Dutch Netherlands, had six classes of merchants, viz. Germans, Danes and Easterlings, (meaning emigrants from the shores of the Baltic, from Denmark to Livonia) Italians, Spaniards, English, and Portuguese. The rate of interest in the time of Charles V. and Philip II. was 12 per cent. Guicciardini, in his history, enumerates the articles of trade from Antwerp to all of these countries, which bore a full proportion to what our authors ascribe to London, at that time. Armuyden, in the island of Walcheren, which was the port of rendezvous for the shipping of Antwerp had, according to this authority, often 500 ships in its harbour. He concludes with enumerating the different classes of its artizans and manufacturers, a circumstance which seems to have led De Witt, in his interests of Holland, to institute a comparison between the commerce of Antwerp and of Amsterdam;—

—That when the Duke of Alva in 1576 imprisoned the Magistrates of Antwerp, and forced the inhabitants to take up arms, he almost ruined the trade of this great city;—That when the Duke of Parma, in 1585, besieged and took Antwerp, plundered it for three days, of more than three  
millions



millions of pistoles, besides an equal value of merchandize, put to the sword more than three thousand of its inhabitants, while an equal number were either trodden to death, or drowned in the Scheldt, its trade was finally destroyed. This circumstance forced the greatest part of its manufacturers in silk, damasks, taffaties, bayes, says, serges, stockings, &c. to settle in England, while others of them fled to Amsterdam and the Hanse-Towns; events which rapidly raised the English trade, and gave to its staple that superiority, in the markets of Europe, which it has hitherto maintained.\*

A second inference seems to be;—that after the establishment of the Dutch, as an independent power, and the shutting up of the Scheldt, the Austrian Netherlands ceased to be an emporium, farther than that its produce constantly contributed to exchanges with Holland, England, and France; hence it became, in a commercial as well as in a political view, the interest of England to support the Dutch, whose country had become equally the depôt of the British merchants, furnishing the markets of Germany,

\* Anderfon's History of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 15.

and

and a maritime power, able to prevent France from sending fleets into the Narrow Seas ;—It next became the interest of the Dutch, because their trade depended upon the preceding circumstance, as well as their independence, on the armies which Austria and England could send into Flanders to maintain that valuable barrier ;—It lastly became the interest of Austria and of the Empire, because, by possessing Flanders, they could derive resources from England and from Holland, to enable their armies to attack the northern frontier of France, and could stop the progress of that ambitious power, on the skirts of the empire bordering on the Rhine.

In illustration it may be observed ;—That the comparative state of the trade of London and Antwerp, before the fall of the latter city, and the comparative state of the trade of London and Amsterdam since that period, discover the resources which the Low Countries can afford, for the formation of a navy ; and that in the possession of a separate power, the natural alliance must be with Britain, both to exclude the French from the commerce, between the Low Countries and Germany, and between them and the Baltic. If France shall acquire the coasts  
of

of the Netherlands, it can cut off the resources, which have hitherto enabled England, Holland, and Germany, by the treaties enumerated in the preceding part, to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and England the balance of trade with the Netherlands, in its own favor ;—

—That it has been the invariable policy of France, from the period of Francis I. to the present moment, to make a conquest of the Austrian Netherlands, foreseeing that if this object could be attained, both Holland and Germany must fall an easy prey to its armies ; that the former would lose the most valuable branch of its trade, viz. supplying Germany by the navigation of the Maese and the Rhine ; and that the latter would lose its best resources, from its communication with England being at an end. Hence in all the wars, particularly those of Louis XIV. France readily gave up superior foreign advantages, for apparently inferior acquisitions, on the borders of the Rhine, and on the side of Flanders.

#### H O L L A N D.

The provinces which, by the revolution in the Low-Countries, 1579, threw off their dependency

dency upon Philip II. had, anterior to this æra, possessed a share of the trade to Britain, and to the north of Germany. As each of these provinces had been subject to their own Counts, Princes, and Bishops, each had its own particular form of government, though, as a country, they were connected with the German Empire, by a species of indirect feudal tenure.

This connexion did not prevent the sovereignty of each of the provinces, from forming treaties of commerce with England, Scotland, and the Powers of the North, which the vicinity of these countries rendered mutually necessary and advantageous.

1325.—Edward II. formed a convention with William Earl of Holland, for preventing disputes relating to commerce, and depredations on the high seas.\*

1337.—Edward III. allowed the export of wool, which hitherto had been sent to Flanders only, to pass to Dutch Brabant.†

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 179.

† Anderson's *History of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 305. upon the authority of Barnes's *History of Edward III.*

1438.—Henry VI. formed a commercial treaty with the Earls of Holland, Zealand, and Friesland.\*

1608.—James I. formed a defensive and commercial treaty with the States General.†

1654.—A treaty was formed between Oliver Cromwell and the States, restoring the commercial intercourse between the two countries.‡

1667-8.—A treaty of commerce was formed between Great Britain and Holland by Charles II. which nearly restored the privileges of the two nations to the footing of the former treaties.§

1674.—Charles II. at the request of his Parliament, renewed his treaty of commerce with Holland, at Westminster, and the Marine Treaty,

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. x. p. 713.

† Ibid. vol. xvi. p. 667.

‡ Thurloe's *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 266—280.

—It was by this treaty that the privileges of the British flag were first recognized.

§ Chalmer's *Treaties*, vol. i. p. 124.

—It was while this treaty was pending, that the Dutch, under de Ruyter, took the advantage of Charles's misplaced confidence, landed at Sheerness, blew up the fort, and destroyed a part of the English fleet.

as it has been termed, between England and the States, by which the privileges of trade were renewed, and the privileges of the British flag in the Narrow Seas recognized.\*

1689.—King William and the States General entered into a treaty of alliance and commerce, against France, the object of which was, to force Louis XIV. to equitable terms of commercial intercourse, in order that the trade of both nations, particularly in the Narrow Seas, might be exempted from the interferences of France. This treaty led to that of the grand alliance, concluded the same year.

As the union with Scotland took place, before any further commercial treaties, between England and Holland, were formed. it may be proper to take a retrospect of the commercial relations subsisting, between Scotland and the Low Countries, before the privileges of both kingdoms were concentrated.

So early as the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Scotch had a considerable commercial intercourse with the Low Countries. Edward II. before the invasion of Scotland, applied to the

\* Chalmers's Treaties, vol. i. p. 125.

Earl of Flanders, to abolish the Scotch privileges, but received for answer, "that the country of Flanders was common to all the world."\* The Scotch trade with the Netherlands, of course, continued to encrease, and in 1444 James I. of Scotland removed its staple from Bruges in Flanders, to Campveere in Zealand.†

In 1503, by an act of the Scotch Parliament, the office of conservator of the Scotch privileges in the Low Countries was established. This Magistrate, with four Scotch merchants, were to be judges in all mercantile cases, between the merchants of Scotland in the Netherlands. The conservators court, therefore, had an independent jurisdiction, a right which the Scotch have enjoyed, till the late subjugation of Zealand by the French,

1709 — By the separate articles in the treaty of the Hague, the commercial intercourse with the Dutch was continued.

1716. — A treaty between Great Britain and

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 771.

† Anderson's *History of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 462, on the authority of *Grande Chronique de Hollande, Zelande, &c.*

This event took place, when James I. of Scotland married his daughter Mary to Wolfred van Borselen, Lord of Veere.

the

the States General, for renewing former alliances and conventions, was formed, and in 1718 the convention between the Emperor, Great Britain, and the States, was held with the same object.

1731.—The preceding treaties were still farther ratified, by that at Vienna, and more fully explained, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748,

1784.—The treaty of Versailles included the confirmation of the commercial privileges of the Dutch and English, which were farther ratified by the treaty of the Hague, 1788.\*

As a first inference, it follows;—that while the Netherlands were under the dominion of Charles V. and Philip II. it was the interest of Britain to maintain its commercial intercourse with that country, by a conduct, which kept in balance the power of France and of the Emperor, but after the rise of the Dutch power, it became the obvious interest both of Britain and of the States General, to consider Flanders, not only as a barrier against the encroachments of France, but a barrier also against that monarchy having access through the Maese to the trade to Germany, and to that to the north of Europe.

\* Chalmers's Treaties, vol. i. p. 128.



No illustration seems necessary farther than a reference to the treaties which have been enumerated, and to the successive efforts which Britain has made, for the demolition of Dunkirk, as the only sea-port which afforded the French opportunities of harassing her coasting and north sea trade; hence, the repeated guarantees of Flanders, both by England and Holland, as a possession of Austria; and hence the efforts of that power to maintain a territory which connected it so intimately, with the resources and safety of the maritime powers.

As a second inference, it follows;—that if France shall obtain from Austria the possession of Flanders, and if Holland become a dependency of France not only will all the commercial advantages, which the preceding treaties have for ages secured, be finally lost, but it will be in the power of France to monopolize the trade by the Maese, and the Zuyder-Zee to Germany; and to form as powerful a navy in the North Seas, as she has hitherto possessed in the Channel; Hence if France shall fortify the coasts of the Netherlands with garrisons only, she can protect her new, as she has done her ancient coasts, send her cruizers from the Scheldt and the Maese to distress our trade, and have her formidable armies in a situation to invade Britain and Ireland, or to over-run and subvert the German Empire and the states of Italy.

## P A R T IV.

Political Effects which necessarily would result from the former Balance of Power in Europe being destroyed, contrasted with Conjectures, respecting the political Effects which would follow; from another Balance of Power being established that may be analogous to it.

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## C O N T E N T S.

Arrangement of the political Effects, in the actual Situation of Affairs in Europe, if the old Balance of Power shall be destroyed—State of it previously to the present War—Different and unequal Efforts of the European Nations to support and to maintain it—By Treaties—By a general War—Consequences to Europe, if France should retain its Conquests, or should be hemmed in within its former Limits—Consequences to Europe from the Restoration of the former Balance of Power—To France—To the Powers who still are Parties in the War—To the Powers which have receded from the War—Conjectures on the Formation of a new Balance of Power that may be analogous to the former.

IN

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IN the first Part of this Research, a retrospect was taken of the historical events which produced the balance of power in Europe, and established it as a system upon which independent nations have proceeded, in maintaining their mutual relations. Events, during the present war, have in part overturned that system, so that at this crisis, we have, from the preceding classes of evidence, to reason to the effects which necessarily must result, from an established political system being abandoned, or from efforts being made for its restoration.

With this object, we shall first refer to the arrangements made by the European nations to settle a balance of political power, previously to the opening of the present war.

When Louis XIV. had consolidated the French monarchy, he projected conquests on the side of the Rhine, and in Flanders. The leading powers in Germany, and the maritime powers began to be alarmed at encroachments, which

which threatened the subversion of the liberties of Europe: hence the treaties which led to the general alliances for stopping the progress of his arms, and for balancing the power which the concentrated situation of France, its immense resources, and the able politics of the ministers of that Prince, enabled him to employ.

Holland, in a particular manner, guided by the foresight and talents of King William, and England (alarmed equally at the rapid increase of the French navy, and at the conquests in Flanders, which menaced the extinction of her coasting and Baltic trade, notwithstanding the civil war in which she had been plunged, and the secret influence of the French Ministers with the unfortunate House of Stuart) entered into alliances with the German Princes, to oppose the encroachments of so dangerous a neighbour. It was not, however, till the revolution in England, which established the influence of King William, over the two maritime nations, that this political balance was placed in equilibrium, or that the plan of defence was adopted, which, in the wars of Queen Anne, humbled the power of France, and afforded independence to the nations who opposed that monarchy.

P

After

After the peace of Utrecht, which proceeded, in so far as regarded Germany, upon the treaty of Westphalia,\* and in so far as regarded the maritime powers, upon that of the Hague, by which the possession of Austrian Flanders, as the barrier of Holland, and of the navigation of the Narrow Seas, had been guaranteed, Europe continued for thirty years, upon one uniform system, viz. France acted under the family compact with Spain; and the maritime powers, in connexion with the German Empire, acted by consolidating those political relations, which the treaty of Westphalia had enabled them to form; neither party considering it prudent to involve Europe in wars, which at the best could only bring them to the points from which they had set out.

Between the years 1740 and 1750, new schemes of aggrandizement in America, the West-Indies and East-Indies, began in France to assume a dangerous aspect to the maritime powers. The resources, which the French had drawn from their West-India Islands and from their American posses-

\* It was this treaty which ascertained the reciprocal relations and connexions of the Princes of the Empire.

sions,

sions, induced the Ministers of Louis XV. to meditate schemes of conquest in those quarters, and the revolutions in the Mogul Empire, opened to Dupleix, the French Governor of Pondicherry, schemes still more vast in India. France thus hoped to give employment to Britain, in the protection of her distant colonies and trade, and to disable her from affording effectual aid to the powers on the continent of Europe; new accessions might therefore be easily obtained on the side of Flanders and Germany, or new resources might flow in from the subjugation of the British West-India Islands and American Colonies; and from a new empire in the East.

Holland, from the death of King William to this juncture, had remained inactive in the politics of Europe, but had been menaced by a French faction, endeavouring to extinguish the Stadtholdership of the Orange family; though to that family, and to this office, the Dutch owed their political existence.

Events during this war afforded a new opening to the ambitious views of France respecting Germany. Prussia, under the Great Frederick, had become a rival to the House of

Austria, and therefore seconded the views of France, that he might more effectually oppose Austria, and obtain possessions in Silesia, to which he had hitherto only set up a doubtful claim.

The war, however, closed by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748. The interests of France and Spain in the West-Indies and in America, as well as those of Britain, returned to their former level, while Prussia obtained the only advantage, by becoming possessed of a part of Silesia, and Austria and Holland obtained nothing more than a ratification of the barrier treaty.

The scheme of France to obtain power in the West-Indies and America, and with it an increase of resources, still continued, and events in the East-Indies opened to them a more promising prospect, both of cutting off a valuable part of the British resources, and of obtaining an empire in India.

Having profited from fostering the jealousy between Austria and Prussia, France still saw important advantages in Europe, by exciting against each other these rival powers in Germany. Withdrawing therefore its connexion from Prussia, it  
formed:

formed a combination with Austria, by which it was to raise that power to be paramount in Germany, and to leave Flanders untouched, while, at the same time, it was to attack the Prussian and Hanoverian dominions, and thus be at liberty to push its conquests, in the West and East Indies, at the very time, when, by its partisans in Holland, it was cutting off from Britain its old maritime ally.

In these ambitious projects, however, the talents of the King of Prussia disappointed France in Germany; while the equally great talents of Lord Chatham drove them from the Continent of America, and wrested equally from France and Spain a valuable part of their settlements in the West Indies and America.

Instead of France acquiring an empire in the East Indies, Britain, by the exertions of the East India Company's civil and military servants, aided by the British armies and fleets, acquired the empire grasped at by its enemy.

Upon the return of peace the European powers assumed nearly the same weight in the scale of politics, which they had held before the commencement of the war; that is, France strengthened its  
league



league with Austria by family ties, while the maritime powers strengthened their union with Prussia and the lesser German States, both to keep up that interest which could enable them to oppose France, in any new scheme of aggrandizement, and to preserve open the commercial intercourse, between Britain, the Netherlands and Germany.

France, though twice disappointed, recurred to its plan of making conquests in the East and West Indies. Availing itself of the revolt of the British Colonies, and of its ancient connexion with Hyder Ally, it again renewed the war against Britain. In this struggle the powers of Europe assumed a new political aspect ; America and the East Indies were held as distant objects, with which they either had no concern, or from which, in common with France, they might derive new resources ; France in particular, held, that Britain weakened by the loss of her Colonies, would no longer be able to stop the progress of the French arms on the side of Flanders and Germany. For a time therefore, the whole of the European powers looked on with indifference and apathy, but at last Holland and Spain joined in the combination against the country, which had hitherto enabled the one to maintain

maintain its independence, and afforded the other the most valuable part of its European trade.

The peace which separated her Colonies from Britain, instead of producing the effects which France had expected, or the benefits which the other European nations had proposed to reap from a commerce with the new world, in a short time brought on the fall of the French monarchy, and with it, either the subversion, or the humiliation of all the powers, which France had seduced into the general combination against Britain.

Before the fall of the French Monarchy, the following was the arrangement of the European states, for maintaining a balance of power.

On the one hand, France, Spain, Sardinia, the Italian powers, with the German Princes under the influence of the house of Austria;—on the other hand, Britain, Holland, Prussia, and the German powers under its influence. The object of France was to increase its resources by its connexion with America, and to render its power predominant on the side of Germany by co-operation with Austria; the object of Britain was to revive and strengthen its connexion with Holland, as the barrier  
of

of Flanders was becoming doubtful, from the mis-guided politics of the Emperor Joseph II. and to confirm its connexion with Prussia, by supporting the last political effort of the great Frederick, viz. that of dividing the influence in the German Empire with the House of Austria.

Having thus marked out the political arrangements under which the European nations were proceeding, when the revolution in France, with the ruin of the Monarchy, threatened a like evil to all established governments of Europe, and of consequence the extinction of that political system, under which they had acted; we have in the next place to mark the effects which have resulted from the efforts of the European Powers to maintain and to restore it.

The first effect was, the formation of treaties to resist France, now held to be the common enemy;—the second effect was a general war, to repel equally the invasions with which the whole were threatened, and to prevent the revolutions which France was exciting in the dominions of all its neighbours.

The

The first effect, or the formation of treaties by the European powers to resist the attack of France has already been detailed.\* Their jealousy of each other, which for two ages had led to such various combinations, seemed at once to have been forgotten, in the common danger which assailed the whole. Austria, after a long war with the Turks, instead of seeing Prussia ready to take advantage of the unprovoked invasion of Flanders, found an ally in its rival; while the Maritime Powers, equally threatened by the new Republic, united with Austria, with Prussia, and with the German Empire, to repel the French devastation of the north of Europe. Spain and the Italian States, equally alarmed, joined in a confederacy dictated not more by the sense of national safety than of honor.

Judging from the common fate of war, or from the established resources of the allied powers engaged in the struggle, this first effect would have been sufficient, but looking to the resources which France created, by a general pillage of all the property of its subjects, and to the enthusiasm for a speculative liberty, which goaded on to battle by the

\* See Part I.

system of terror, we have before us efforts equally destructive to the nation which exerted them, and to the confederates who opposed them. What is still more inexplicable, the allied powers not only had the enemy *en masse* to oppose, but that enemy supported by many of the industrious orders of the people, in the countries which the French armies invaded: Revolts also, in their levelling jargon, were beginning to be organized in countries which the French armies could not reach. Hence we cease to consider the confederacy formed against France to be formidable, in the opinion of the French revolutionists.

The second effect, or a general war to repel the invasions of France, and to check the revolutions which it was fomenting in the countries of its opponents, necessarily took place. Had the coalesced powers acted up to the treaties upon which the war opened, the struggle must have soon terminated in restoring Europe to its former political balance; but the jealousy or impolitic measures of Prussia, the embarrassments from the abettors of France in Holland, and fear in Spain, withdrew these powers from the alliance, and have left Britain and Austria to oppose the enemy against which the war opened, and  
against

against the maritime power of Europe from the Pyrenees to the German Ocean.

These circumstances lead us, in the third place, to examine, from the present state of Europe, the consequences to the balance of power, supposing France under any form of government, to annex its conquests to its ancient domain, or to be hemmed in within its former limits.

The present political state of Europe affords an aspect, as new as it is precarious.

The nations which continue the war against France, have preserved their forms of government, though their resources must have been impaired, by the expences incurred in their defence.

The nations who have seceded from the war, though they still act under the established form of their government, yet have, in greater or less degrees, lost that weight with foreign states, and, therefore, that authority with their own subjects, which would have enabled them permanently to preserve the forms of their government.

The nations who have acted upon the principles of neutrality, though they retain their

forms of government, are yet daily losing in the energy which can preserve them.

France itself, if it begins to assume something like a regular subordination, yet from the character of its present rulers, either must soon become enslaved to its directory, or replunged into its revolutionary system. The probable, though perhaps, the distant termination of the first must be monarchy, the certain termination of the last anarchy.

From the actual State of Europe, upon the first supposition, or that the convulsions in France shall terminate in a Monarchy, and that it shall retain its conquests, we have already shewn in Part I. that in territory, strength, (military and naval) and resources, it must be in the capacity, after the return of the arts of peace, to make successful attacks in every line, to which it may direct its power.

Upon the same supposition, that it shall terminate in a Monarchy, but be hemmed in within its former limits: the balance of power, indeed, may be restored in Europe; but France itself, from the total change in the character of its inhabitants,

tants, from the exhausted state of its finances, and from the extinction of its arts, manufactures and trade, must be a long time indeed, before it can regain or acquire the influence or ascendancy it once possessed in the different courts of Europe; an influence which rendered it formidable before the fall of the Monarchy.

Upon the second supposition, that the present prospect of a regular government shall sink under the revolutionary system, though France should retain its conquests, the arts of peace cannot be revived, because in this case, it can give as little security to its subjects for their property, as to neighbouring nations for the treaties to which it may assent. Its rulers can then stipulate only, during the continuance of their power; their successors or murderers must, from the nature of their elevation, violate and break through the engagements of the men whom they have degraded.

Upon the same supposition, of the revival of the revolutionary system, and though France should be hemmed in, within its ancient limits, the evil will only be less in degree, but not in kind.

The result, with respect to Europe, is obvious, that under any aspect of government,  
which



which France may assume, if it retain its conquests (or even Flanders without Holland, and much more with it) the political balance of nations must ultimately be destroyed, but if under a regular subordination, it be kept within its former territory, its weight in the scale will be in proportion only to its internal resources, which can but slowly recover their former level; and thus, for many years, that kingdom must be without the influence or ascendancy over the European Powers, which it has exercised for two centuries.

It remains therefore only to conjecture the effects which would follow, from the restoration of the former balance of power, or the formation of one which might be analogous to it.

These conjectures may be offered as results from the preceding evidence, by recurring to the divisions of the European Nations already mentioned, and applying that evidence to France, to the nations who are, or have been parties in the war, and to those who have observed a neutrality.

France, upon the supposition of the restoration of the former balance of power, will have (reasoning from the present state of that country) the following  
internal

internal advantages to regain ;—a regular defined government to establish and consolidate, in the permanency of which other nations can have confidence ;—laws to protect private property, and to give to arts, manufactures, and commerce, their natural spring ;—a police, which shall, at the same time, ensure the administration of the laws, and afford safety to the subjects of other nations who may have intercourse with them ;—and resources arising from legal taxation of property of every description.

These necessary constituents of any sovereignty, which can take its part among civilized nations, cannot, as the experience of France has demonstrated, proceed from speculative refinements, but must gradually grow up with practice, and experience improving on that practice.

To this point of national character there seems to be only two roads, either the restoration of the former Monarchy, mollified in its spirit by adversity, or the elevation of a new dynasty of Directors, or Dictators. The first termination would, from the nature of the case, more rapidly revive civilization, because less exposed to theory, and because, under a known system, it would be more easy to recur to practice. The second termination

nation must, from the nature of the case, be more difficult, more exposed to the evils of speculation, and less reconcileable to practice in France itself, and to the usages and manners of foreign nations having intercourse with it.

Under these circumstances, it is obvious, that in so far as regards France, if the government assume any regular aspect, its weight in the scale of Europe must be less, for many years, than that of the ancient monarchy, which, in the idea of Rousseau, “ Stretched its filaments from Versailles to all the great and all the little capitals of Europe, not one of which could be touched and the effects not felt at the centre.”

In so far as regards the other nations of Europe, the restoration of the former balance must have effects, corresponding to the existing circumstances, in which they are placed.

As the allies, who have continued the war, must be the contracting parties, in restoring peace, the balance of power must, in the first instance, rest with them. Britain from its resources and naval strength and from the intimate commercial relations subsisting between it and the restored sovereigns of the Netherlands, and the nations bordering on the Baltic, particularly Russia, whose force can counteract

tract all the others, will probably proceed upon the principle of preventing new schemes of aggrandizement from arising in France. The Emperor, from his situation and extensive though disconnected territories, with his various political relations in Germany, may proceed in one of two lines; if the Monarchy be restored to the degraded Bourbons, his weight will necessarily be thrown into the scale which may serve to re-establish their power;—but if a new dynasty of Directors or Dictators shall arise, Vienna will become a centre of political proceedings to the lesser powers of the Empire, whose recent sufferings from France must, for a long time, detach them from its influence and interests.

Upon the first supposition, the treaties of Vienna with France will go to the obtaining of security to the Frontiers of the Empire, bordering on the Rhine, and to the barrier of Flanders.

Upon the second supposition, or a new dynasty in France, the preceding politics of Vienna must be altered or weakened; a great share of its force, as well as its influence with the German Princes, must be directed to defend the frontier of the Empire and Flanders, against a neighbour in

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whose character and proceedings it can have little confidence.

If we pass from the Powers who are parties in the war to those who have receded from it, viz. Prussia and Spain, and reason upon the former supposition, that of the restoration of Monarchy, we may, in like manner, conjecture respecting the weight of either of these Powers in the political scale. The former, or Prussia, will escape from its entanglements with the Republic of France, but from the distance of its dominions from the frontier of that country, as well as from its versatile politics, it must necessarily have the French influence in the Empire against it; and from its recent conduct towards Britain, and its unnatural (it is to be hoped temporary) abandonment of the Stadtholder, it cannot be supposed to be soon in the train of becoming the political rival of Austria in the Empire, and therefore must recur to that weight in Europe, which it held before the talents of the great Frederick had raised his kingdom to the rank of a first nation.

Spain, upon the supposition of the restoration of the Monarchy, would, with the obliquity of having deserted the first branch of its race, necessarily recur to the family compact; but upon the supposition of a new dynasty, it either must remain  
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a dependency, under something like the late treaty with France, or rekindle its national spirit and assert its rank as a nation in Europe; for without this effort it may lose its possessions in the Indies.

Such seem to be the probable effects of the restoration of the former balance of power in Europe; but it is more difficult to conjecture, respecting the formation of a new one, that shall be analogous to it.

If on this subject, we were to reason from the actual circumstances of the European states, we must, upon the supposition of a regular government being formed in France, trace power in Europe, to be divided between that country, Spain, and Prussia, and between Britain and Austria both in Germany and in the Netherlands, and between the northern powers of Sweden, Denmark, and Russia.

Upon the supposition of the Monarchy being restored, France, Spain, and Austria, with the lesser northern Powers, would probably pass into the one scale, while Britain, Russia, and Holland would pass into the other. The relative resources and strength, as well as political interests of these different

classes of sovereignties, point out these, as the most probable political relations.

Upon the other supposition, that of a new dynasty in France, this classification of the European Powers would necessarily take a different aspect; into the one scale would probably pass France, Spain, Prussia, and the lesser northern Powers, or Sweden and Denmark; into the other, Austria, the Netherlands, Holland, Britain and Russia.

These conjectures arise from the preceding classes of evidence, and from the existing circumstances of the European States, but in the progress of nations, accidents, more frequently than principles, decide their fates.

## P A R T V.

Commercial Effects to Europe, and in a particular Manner to Britain, supposing the present Conquests of France to be annexed to it, under any practicable Form of Government, compared with the commercial Effects, supposing either the former Balance of Trade with the Netherlands, which has been in favour of Britain, to be restored, or in the present State of Affairs in Europe, a general Peace to take place.

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## C O N T E N T S.

References to the commercial Treaties with the Netherlands, enumerated in Part III. and to the Results from them—Application of these Results to the Question in commercial Œconomy, What must be the Effects of the Netherlands being annexed to the Dominions of France?—Arrangement of the Evidence leading to the Solution of this Question—Review of the Trade of the Austrian Netherlands—Natural Produce of this Country—Its manufactured Produce—Imports which it received from Britain, from Holland, and from France—Regulations under which its Trade was conducted—Commercial Inferences from this Class of evidence—Review of the Trade of the Dutch Netherlands—Historical Events which gave rise to the Dutch Navigation, and affected its Pro-



Progress and Decline—Circumstances, in the Situation of the Dutch which created and must, in some degree, continue to them the depôt Trade—Recent State of the British Trade with the United Provinces—Commercial Effects if Holland be annexed to France—Commercial Effects, if the Balance of Trade be either destroyed or restored; —if destroyed, one Centre of Exchange on the Continent, and one Centre of Credit lost—and the Dutch Arts, Manufactures, Commerce, and Navigation, depressed—Effects if restored—On the Countries desolated by the War—Or on Holland—Flanders—the Frontier of Germany—France.—On the Countries which have escaped the Desolations of the War—Or on Great Britain—the German States—Spain—Italy—Russia—And on the Neutral Powers—Conjectures respecting the commercial Effects, supposing a general Peace to take place at this Time—Circumstances in which Commercial Nations would probably be placed, on the supposition of this Event—Trade of Great Britain—of Germany—of Russia—of Spain—of Prussia—of Sweden—of Denmark—and of America—Results leading to what, in a Treaty of Peace, would be safe and permanent for Trade—First Conjecture from these results—Second Conjecture—Third Conjecture.

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IN the third Part of these Enquiries, the commercial treaties between the Netherlands  
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(Austrian and Dutch,) on the one part, and Great Britain on the other, have been enumerated, and, in connexion with the political treaties detailed in Part II. led to conclusions, to the following effect ;—

—That a commercial connexion had subsisted between Britain and the Netherlands, for three centuries, which contributed to the resources of both countries ;—

—That this connexion was necessary for Britain, by opening, for its produce and foreign merchandize, the markets of the Netherlands and of Germany ;—

—That it has been a leading object, in all the treaties formed between the successive Sovereigns of the Netherlands and of Britain, to preserve that country, not only as a barrier against the French power, but as a coast to protect the extensive commerce and naval power of Great Britain and Holland.

The question for examination is ;—Whether, upon the supposition of France annexing, at a general peace, the Austrian Netherlands to its northern frontier, it would not become completely possessed of the trade of that country, and consequently of the  
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naval power which it would produce; and if so, in a situation to controul the trade of Britain with the Netherlands and with the north of Europe, and in the event of a war, to destroy the most productive part of our commercial intercourse with the Baltic, and also essentially to harass our coasting trade, on the eastern side of these kingdoms ?

With the object of bringing forward the evidence, upon this interesting national subject, we shall ;—

1. Review the constituent parts of the trade of the Austrian Netherlands, and connect with it the commercial intercourse which that country had, at the opening of the war, with Britain, with the United Provinces, and with Germany ;

2. Review the constituent parts of the trade of the Dutch Netherlands, and connect it with the commercial transactions which Britain had with the Austrian Netherlands and with Germany ;

3. Examine the commercial effects which would necessarily result from the trade with the Netherlands being destroyed, and contrast them with the effects which would follow, either from that trade being restored, or from a peace taking

taking place, in the present state of affairs in Europe.

### I. Trade of the Austrian Netherlands.

In reviewing this subject, we shall give a short statement of the natural and manufactured productions which the Flamands exported to different countries;—of the imports they received from Britain, Holland, and France;—of the regulations under which commerce was conducted : and subjoin commercial inferences respecting the importance of this trade to Great Britain.

The principal natural productions were, as follow ; \*—

Corn, of which this country, upon an average, produced annually more than was equal to the consumption of its inhabitants for two years ; the surplus formed its most valuable export ; a large quantity was taken off by the French on their northern frontier, and paid for in French coin (which had a general circulation in the Netherlands)

\* The facts, upon which the reasonings on this article proceed, were furnished from a commercial survey of the Netherlands, by a gentleman not less distinguished for his commercial, than his financial information.

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and with manufactured silks and wines. Besides the corn sent to France by the frontier, considerable quantities were shipped from Ostend to the southern parts of that kingdom, and to other southern parts of Europe; proportions also of it were exported occasionally from Ostend to Hamburgh and to the Baltic; but the greatest quantity was sent to Holland by the Scheldt and the Maese, both to supply the Dutch, and for exportation.

Flax—was the next article: and in quality superior to any raised in Europe. This article may be cultivated in Flanders with success to almost any extent.\*

Rape-seed—was cultivated in considerable quantities; the oil expressed from it was chiefly sent to Holland, and formed a very material article of merchandize with that country.

Tobacco—was cultivated in the country between Brussels, Louvain, and Tirlemont. In quality it is inferior to the Maryland tobacco, and was consumed chiefly by the inhabitants in smoking.

\* The flax used in the manufacture of laces and fine thread, for exportation, is pulled when green, and prepared by a particular process, for that purpose.

Hops.

**Hops.**—The country between Bruffels and Louvain produced the finest hops in Europe; and in such abundance, that it supplied all the breweries in the Netherlands.—

**Coals.**—The best mines are in the neighbourhood of Namur.

The principal manufactured productions are; —

**Linens.**—Though this article was chiefly made in the country about Ghent, branches of the manufacture were to be found over all the provinces. It was in part exported to Portugal, but chiefly to Spain; and, from the latter, was shipped, both in a white and printed state, for South America.

**Laces**—known under the names of Bruffels and Mechlin, were not made by any collected body of people, but wove in private houses by women, children, and old men. The quantity smuggled into Britain was more considerable some years ago, than at this time. The best judges are of opinion, that the manufacture of fine laces in Britain can never be carried on with success.

**Leather**—was manufactured in considerable quantities, both in Flanders and in Brabant; though inferior in quality to English leather, it was

cheaper, and in general use with the inhabitants. It was exported in considerable quantities to various parts of Germany.

Hats—of the finer kind, were equally good with the English. The English coarse or felt hats were superior to the Flemish, but the high duty upon them prevented their finding a market.\*

Superfine woollen cloths—were manufactured in the Duchies of Limbourg and Juliers, and in different parts of Brabant, at from five to twelve per cent. lower than English cloths of the same quality. The coarse cloths however for men, such as bear skin duffles, and even coarse stockings, were chiefly brought from England.

Beer—was manufactured in large quantities at Louvain, and was of two kinds, *bierre blanche* and *bierre brune*; the former of a very inferior quality, the latter, even the best sort of it, called *bierre Peterman*, was not so good as our ordinary ale. It

\* The cheapness of hats in Flanders, was owing to the following circumstances:—To the great quantities of cheap materials for the manufacture of hats found in the north of Germany;—To the texture of the hat, being less hard than the English, and therefore taking in the dye or colour better; and to the greater quantity of madder used in all black dye stuffs, in Flanders and Holland, than in Great Britain.

was chiefly consumed in the country, and was but a very inconsiderable article of export.

Black Silks—of which the principal manufacture was at Antwerp, were superior in quality and colour to any in Europe.

Cutting of Diamonds.—A great body of people were employed at Antwerp, in this single branch. In 1792, a considerable proportion of the diamonds in Europe were sent to this place to be cut.

Salt.—A considerable manufacture of this article was carried on at Antwerp, but the Dutch extorted a duty on the vessels bringing the sea water.

Printed Cottons.—A very small quantity of the white cloth for printing was made in Flanders; the chief supply was from the sales of the English East-India Company, and from the coarse white cloths of Manchester, Glasgow and Dundee. The importation from Holland has been very trifling, since the decline of the Dutch East-India Company.†

† The inferiority of the printing, both in taste and workmanship, to the English, is so great, that if the restrictions had been taken off, even with a considerable duty to the Emperor, the trade might have been established.

Pottery



Pottery—was of a very inferior kind, and in little estimation; but to protect this article, a duty of four pence per pound weight, was laid upon pottery imported. Hence the use of china and plate was greater in Flanders than in any country in Europe.\*

Iron manufactures of Liege—The principal articles were cannon, guns, pistols, cutlasses and nails. The greatest part of the fire arms were exported to the coast of Africa, and to give them value had the English mark upon them. From the use however of machinery, in facilitating labour in England, and from the expertness of the work people, at Birmingham and Sheffield, we have undersold the Liegeois in every one of these articles, except nails, of which very considerable quantities were sent to Holland, to Brabant, and to Flanders, by the way of Louvain. On comparing the prime cost of the penknives, buckles, scissars, &c. made at Liege, with that of the same articles made in England, there was from thirty to forty per cent. in our favor.

What enabled the Liegeois to carry on this manufacture, was their coal mines, the veins of which were found near the surface, and therefore worked

\* If a moderate duty had been taken on English pottery, the Emperor would have drawn a considerable revenue.

at a less expence than in England ; but in quality the coals of Liege were from fifteen to twenty per cent. less valuable than the medium quality of Newcastle coals. The land carriage from Liege to the heads of the navigable canals is from thirty to forty miles, so that the price of a ton of coals at Antwerp was about thirty shillings.

Having taken a cursory view of the produce of the Netherlands which constituted the articles of its trade, we have next to advert to the imports which that country received from Britain, Holland and France.

The foreign trade of the Low Countries was chiefly confined to the port of Ostend, for what was received at Antwerp came wholly through the Dutch Provinces. The harbour of Nieuport is too shallow to admit large vessels fit for a foreign trade, and has chiefly been resorted to by vessels employed in fishing upon the coast. A considerable quantity of goods from France was received through the frontier, particularly wines and silks, in exchange for corn, butter, Rhenish wine, spirits, &c.\*

\* A considerable quantity of foreign wines and spirits was imported at Ostend.

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The British exports to Ostend progressively increased from 1740 to 1765, and at that period consisted chiefly of the British colony tobacco, rice and raw sugar.

The value of the British manufactures sent to Ostend, and in smaller vessels to Nieuport, in 1792, amounted to somewhat more than £.400,000, and the value of the foreign merchandize to upwards of £.650,000; of which about £.400,000 was in East-India muslins, calicoes, pepper, China and Bengal silks; and about £.200,000 in the products of America and the West-Indies.

On an average, of the three years preceding the war, 302 British vessels, carrying 33,422 tons, (including their repeated voyages in the same year) cleared out from the ports of this kingdom for the Austrian Netherlands, and 288 British vessels, carrying 27,646 tons, arrived from thence in Britain. The value of the freights cannot be easily ascertained. It must however be an object of considerable mercantile profit, as well as of political importance, by giving employment to so great a body of British seamen.

The imported goods at Ostend were sent  
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by the canal to Bruges, and thence to Ghent,\* at as little expence as they could be by way of Antwerp, a circumstance which proves, that the opening of the Scheldt would not be of such commercial importance to Flanders, as has been generally supposed, whatever might be its political consequences.

The general regulations under which the commerce in the Netherlands was conducted, were, as follow ;—

Ostend, as has been already noticed, was the principal if not the only port ; the goods were landed and deposited in the warehouses of the merchants, without being inspected by the revenue officers, and in this view of the subject, Ostend was a free port. Before, however, the goods were allowed to pass the barrier gate to be sent to markets in the country, the merchant or his agent was obliged to give a manifest to the Imperial officers, declaratory of the contents of each package, and of the place to which the goods were to be sent. The packages were then *plumbed*, so that the contents could not be

\* Ghent may be considered as the centre of the markets in Flanders.

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touched, till the goods reached their place of destination, where they were examined by the revenue officer who collected the duties. In some cases the duty was rated, in others there was a rated duty and a duty *ad valorem*, in the same way as on our East-India callicoes; on some articles, the duty *ad valorem* only was paid. If the declared value appeared to the officer to be too low rated, he might take the goods on his own account, upon making prompt payment to the merchant of 15 per cent. above the declared value, and the King's duty. Besides these public duties, local imposts were levied, applicable to the revenues of towns or districts.

Goods intended for Germany or other countries, and *plombed* upon the entrance, paid at the last frontier, about one per cent. for the transit. It was difficult to ascertain the average amount, per cent. ; because such duties were in some instances collected, at a certain rate on the ell, hundred weight, &c. and in others, on the value. At a medium the imports from Britain were not subject by law to a higher duty than ten per cent.

It appears from these facts, that the trade to the Austrian Netherlands took off annually, upwards

wards of £.1,000,000 of our merchandize, employed upwards of 25,000 tons of our shipping, and must be regarded as an object of great national advantage.

The commercial and naval inferences which this evidence affords, seem to be the following :—

—That as the Austrian Netherlands depended on other countries, for a supply of many of the conveniences and luxuries of life, such as British manufactures, and West and East-India produce, a valuable outlet for our trade would be lost, by the Low Countries becoming a seat of commerce, dependent on France ;—

—That France by the possession of the Netherlands, by opening the navigation of the Scheldt, and by rendering Antwerp a depôt for merchandize, would increase its commercial resources, controul the Dutch trade in the eastern branch of that river, which communicates with Zealand and Holland, engross that portion of traffic which has hitherto been carried on, partly by the Dutch, and partly by the Flamands, through Westphalia into Germany, and acquire the com-

mand of the mouth of the Maese, the principal outlet of the Rhine, by which the manufactures of Britain pass, not only into the Seven Provinces, but into Germany, and by which the produce of Germany has been brought to these Provinces and to Britain ;—

—That France by rendering Antwerp a naval port, could controul not only the Dutch trade on the Maese and the Rhine, but that of Zealand and Holland; and, from the mouth of the Scheldt\* being nearly opposite to that of the Thames, in the event of any future war, by squadrons and cruizers, it could distress both our foreign and coasting trade in the Narrow Seas, in the same manner

as

\* What Mirabeau, who overturned the French monarchy, said, on the dispute between the Emperor and the Dutch, respecting the Scheldt, incontrovertibly illustrates not only the importance of the Netherlands to the defence of Holland, but the schemes of aggrandizement which the present rulers of France have in view, in retaining the possession of them; “ It is not, as has often been alledged, mere  
“ commercial jealousies, or the rivalry of merchants, that  
“ is in dispute between the Emperor and the Dutch; the  
“ real safety, the physical existence, as well as the liberty  
“ and independence of the United Provinces are at stake.”

See

as it has done our Italian and Turkey traders from its own hostile coasts, and from those of Spain in the Mediterranean.†

## II. Trade of the Dutch Netherlands.

In taking a review of the constituents of the trade of the Dutch Netherlands with Britain, we must recur to the historical events which gave rise; to the Dutch navigation and affected its progress; to the circumstances, in the situation of the United Provinces, which have created and which must, in some degree, continue with them a *dépôt* trade in Europe; to the recent state of the trade between Britain and Holland; and then draw from this evidence, the results which would follow, if the Provinces again become independent, or if they be annexed as a dependency on France.

From the union of Utrecht 1579, to the treaty of Munster 1648, which acknowledged the independence of the States, the Dutch chiefly directed their attention to the establishment of their

See Doubts concerning the Free Navigation of the Scheldt, &c. by the Count de Mirabeau.

† See Whitworth's Tables.

foreign



foreign trade and settlements in the East and West Indies. In 1595, Houtman established their connexion with Bantam, in the Island of Java; and in 1598, their East India Company was formed, which, in a short time, established settlements at Banda, and in the Moluccas. Soon afterwards they fixed establishments at Sumatra, Ceylon, &c. and by 1640, got possession of the principal Portuguese settlements in the East Indies; at the same period, their West India Company attempted establishments upon the Coast of Brazil, in which, though they failed, the Company when revived got possession of the Islands of Tobago and Curaçoa. They afterwards established themselves at New Netherlands or New York, at Surinam, Berbice, Essequibo, and Demerary; and in Europe, they extended their navigation to Germany, the Baltic, the Austrian Netherlands, England, France, Spain, and the Levant.\*

Such articles of European manufactured produce, as they either consumed themselves or exported, they brought, during the early periods of the Republic, from the European countries,

\* *La Richesse de la Hollande, Tom. I. passim.*

with

with which they had already formed connexions, or treaties of commerce.

The commercial as well as political connexion between Holland and England was kept open, from the epoch of the union at Utrecht 1579, to the peace of Munster 1648; and as the Dutch had little intercourse with Flanders, the English woollens, &c. supplied equally their consumpt and their export trade;—At last however they established the woollen manufactures at Leyden, which supplied them with broad and narrow cloths, camblets, serges, druggets, &c. and a linen manufactory at Harlaem, of which also there were branches at Groningen, Friesland, and Overysfel.—At Delft, they established a manufacture of earthen ware, in imitation of china; and this article supplied not only the home market but that of most of the countries in Europe, till the rise of the English pottery, which completely took the market from Delft.—At Amsterdam there was a manufacture of tapestry, now in disuse, and manufactures of sugar, salt, yellow wax, &c. which are still carried on—At Schiedam and its neighbourhood, the distillery of corn spirits has been long established, and its gin served equally as an article of consumpt in the country, and

and of export to all the different countries to which the Dutch trade extended.

The Dutch fisheries, particularly their herring fishery, were principally carried on in North Holland.

The situation of Holland, relatively to Germany, formed it for the depôt trade, both by a branch of the Rhine communicating with the Zuyder Zee, and by the exports of that country coming down the Rhine and the Maese at a moderate expence.—Dordrecht was long the principal depôt of Rhenish wine, and (as well as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, &c.) of timber, floated down these rivers for ship building.

From France the Dutch brought velvets, silks of all kinds, and gold and silver stuffs. In 1664, they obtained a tariff, which set aside the duty of 50 fous, per ton, imposed upon goods brought from Holland into France, but the war which broke out in 1672, put a stop to this commerce, 'till 1678. Though the trade was restored in some degree, (the war in 1690, having again interrupted it,) the Dutch began to establish manufactures for themselves, in velvets, sattins and other silks, gold and silver brocades; and, in Brabant, of lace, paper, &c. in which they were assisted by numbers of French refugees

refugees; but from this period to 1713, the tariff with France was not renewed.

From these facts it appears;—That the Dutch owed the resources, which raised and supported them, as an independent people, to their navigation to the East and West-Indies, and to the settlements for trade, which they established in both; because these settlements, at the same time that they formed their marine, furnished them with foreign merchandize, to be exchanged for European produce;—

—That the sterility of natural productions in the United Provinces, prevented the Dutch from manufacturing articles properly their own;—

—That their efforts to create manufactures, from materials brought from other countries, could not keep pace with the manufactures of those nations, who were possessed of crude materials, such were the woollens, the hardware, and the pottery of England \* ;—

\* A proportion of the clay used in the manufacture of Delft was imported from England.

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—That when the political situation of neighbouring countries, particularly of England, in the long peace, from the treaty of Utrecht to the war of 1739, enabled it, from the raw materials which the country afforded, to institute manufactures, such as hardware, pottery, and linen, which last was also brought from Ireland, Scotland, and the Austrian Netherlands, the Dutch manufactures of the same descriptions gradually declined.

The circumstances in the situation of the United Provinces which have created, and which must, in some degree, continue with them the depôt trade of Europe, were as follow ;

—When the connexion between the Austrian and Dutch Netherlands was broken off by the civil wars out of which the republic arose, the inhabitants were not only under the necessity of supplying their own wants, by navigation, but the wants of other countries, then strangers to manufactures ; hence the sudden extention of the Dutch navigation to all parts of the world ; hence the treaties of commerce which have been enumerated ; and hence the immense extent of the foreign trade of Holland, which

which may, in a great measure, be called unnatural, because it rested chiefly, not on their own wants, but on those of others.

—The central situation of Holland, in Europe, afforded it the means of supplying, in a short time, the demand of those nations, situated at a great distance from the countries, the productions of which they stood in need of; Holland therefore offered a ready market for the sale of the superfluous commodities of those nations, became an emporium for the depôt trade, and must, in some degree retain this advantage.

To these circumstances, may be added, the following political encouragements;—

—The ports of Holland offered a freedom of navigation to the ships of all nations, without imposing any additional duties beyond those paid by the Dutch themselves; though these were considerable;\*—

\* From the *Mémoire concernant les impositions et droits en Europe*, a work published in 1768, under the orders of the French King, and admitted to be of very high authority, it

—Foreigners obtained an easy admission to the right of burghers in all the towns, which circumstance had the effect to draw inhabitants to the provinces from different countries ; who, from the connexions they had left, extended mercantile intercourse, by making the merchants in every part of Europe acquainted with the certainty of a market and the security of payment in Holland ;—

—As the inhabitants of the Provinces had not domestic objects, for their industry, they were under the necessity of employing themselves in foreign commerce, partly on their own account and partly on commission. By these means, Holland became a deposit of the productions of other nations, and was able to advance large sums, at a low interest, for which they had the value secured in their own warehouses. Thus, though the charge on sending the goods to Holland was against the trade, the credit given and the market found rendered that country an emporium ;—

—The state of the Dutch funds enabled them

appears, that the imposts in Holland were divided into those of appraising or valuation, customs, excise according to weight, the capitation (or *beeregeld*) and a species of land-tax. The whole of these duties were regulated by a tariff. Vol. i. p. 202.

to make loans to the European Powers, engaged in a succession of wars ; as the interest of these loans was to be paid annually, the merchants, in the countries which obtained the loans, remitted to Holland the payments, by investments of goods.

Holland thus became one centre of the exchanges of all Europe, and to its merchants were entrusted the general operations of finance, a circumstance which rendered it easy for individuals to have commercial dealings with that country.

About the year 1740, however, a material change took place in the Dutch carrying-trade. The other maritime nations of Europe began to observe, that they might be the carriers to Holland of their own produce, and leave it there to be sold on commission. The Dutch merchants, under this innovation, gave two-thirds of the value in advance; with which the ship-master, under instructions from his owners, either purchased the goods required for his home market, or returned with the profits of the freight. From this time the Dutch carrying-trade began to decline.

As there were other centres of exchange on the



the continent of Europe, viz. Hamburgh, Cadiz, and Leghorn, the foreign merchants, who sent ships and cargoes to Holland, instead of receiving the goods of other countries from thence, began to carry Dutch bills, for two-thirds of their cargoes, to those ports; and, on the credit of such bills, either purchased cargoes for their own countries, or proceeded to the ports which afforded the commodities.

The Dutch credit being established, these bills served them as money, for which they received goods or other bills, either on the next port which the ship was directed to resort to, or they returned home for a new cargo of their own produce.

From these circumstances, it was the opinion of the best informed merchants, that in a short time, the Dutch must have lost (independently of the late calamities) a large proportion of their carrying and depôt trade, though from the extent of their funds they must always retain a valuable portion of both, as well as from their situation, which connects them with the great rivers that run down from Germany, and disembogue themselves in the Narrow Seas.

From

From these facts it would appear;—That the situation of the Dutch Netherlands, relatively to Austrian Flanders and to Germany, in every possible state of Europe, must give to the Sovereigns of them the command of the commerce of the Maese and the Rhine, and, of course, an exclusive commerce in the produce of the north of Germany, which cannot otherwise be sent to the north of Europe, except by the navigation from the Elbe, exposed to the marine of France, if left in possession of the ports of the Dutch Netherlands;—

—That from the same circumstance, the Dutch must have an exclusive import of all foreign goods required by Germany, which pass up those rivers to the markets in the northern circles of the empire;—

—That if the commerce of Holland shall cease to possess the advantages, which it held from its depôt trade, or from its being a centre of exchange, the Dutch proportion of these advantages can be but partially acquired by Britain.

The following extracts of the tonnage inward and outward, and of the imports and exports between

tween Great Britain and Holland, from the year 1789 to 1794 inclusive, taken from the public accounts, will shew the value of the Dutch trade to Great Britain.

### EXPORTS from HOLLAND to BRITAIN.

Year	Vessels	Tonnage*	Men	Value of Imports.
1789	909	113,726	—	£. 418,846 7 10
1790	975	122,924	6,688	714,707 15 10
1791	897	120,552	6,543	853,984 3 2
1792	1,002	130,281	7,139	801,535 1 6
1793	1,004	132,609	6,988	806,306 13 1
1794	1,121	137,635	8,002	1,013,351 10 1

### EXPORTS from BRITAIN to HOLLAND.

Year	Vessels	Tonnage*	Men	British manufac- tures, value exp	Foreign Merchan- dize, value exported
				£	£
1789	1,176	141,843	—	800,598 16 11	835,467 7 10
1790	998	133,553	6495	727,646 11 3	695,698 17 6
1791	957	135,377	7002	604,862 4 8	673,149 9 4
1792	1,152	139,694	7699	785,207 2 11	1,516,449 8 2
1793	1,000	135,735	7237	476,582 9 2	1,037,938 19 8
1794	858	113,006	6306	464,575 12 10	1,141,736 8 10

From the preceding statement, it appears;—

\* It is to be understood, that the tonnage and number of vessels in this statement is given, as comprehending their repeated voyages, in the same year.

—That

—That the average number of British vessels sent to Holland, during the last six years, has been 1,023, the tonnage of which, including their repeated voyages, was 133,201, and the value upon the same average of British manufactures, about £.643,245, and of British foreign merchandize, about £.983,406 making together £.1,626,651.—

—That the average number of vessels from Holland to Britain during the last six years, has been 984, the tonnage of which, upon the like average, was 126,288, and the value, upon the same average, about £.768,122.—

—That the number of men employed in the service, upon the average of the last five years, was, from Britain to Holland, about 7,000, and from Holland to Britain also about 7,000; a nursery, which is the more valuable, because the sailors return often into port.

It appears from the commercial situation of the United Provinces, relatively to the Austrian Netherlands;—

—That the Dutch have had the command of the imports from Germany by the Rhine,

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to the Maese, and the Zuyder Zee, and therefore the supply of the markets in the north of Germany with such British produce, or such articles of British foreign merchandize, as the German markets took off, and as the Dutch themselves could not furnish ; and that to this supply may be added a considerable share of the British produce, which the Dutch sent to Ostend, and through the Scheldt to Antwerp, to supply the markets which communicated with that city ;—

—That the Dutch, by the possession of this trade, have been enabled to create and to maintain that navy, which in conjunction with the British navy, has excluded the Southern Powers from maritime efforts in the North Seas\* ;—

—That though the Dutch, since the treaty of Munster, have apparently had the balance of trade with Germany and Flanders in their favor, yet that from the amount of British produce sent through

\* As the Dutch have obtained their naval stores from Flanders and Germany, they have hitherto, but in an inconsiderable degree, interfered with the British trade to the East Seas, or to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Russia.

Holland to the German and Flemish markets, this balance has indirectly been in favor of Great Britain.

Having thus adverted to the historical events which gave rise to the Dutch navigation and commerce, and affected its progress; to the circumstances in the situation of the United Provinces, which have created, and which must, in some degree, continue with them, a share of the depot trade; and having taken a view of the recent state of the Dutch trade with Britain; it remains only to look at the effects which would follow, from the Dutch Netherlands being annexed to France, or returning to their former national independence.

It must be obvious, that if France shall keep possession of the Austrian Netherlands, the liberty and independence of the United Provinces must terminate.\* So much have the States been convinced of this truth, that from the establishment to the late fall of their government, it has been

\* Mirabeau, as quoted in a preceding note.

the leading principle of their wisest statesmen,\* to exert every national, as well as confederated effort with Britain and Germany, to maintain Austrian Flanders, as the barrier equally of their liberty and of their resources.† If then the French retain Austrian Flanders, the following effects upon the Dutch commerce and naval power, must necessarily take place.

\* Viz. Barneveldt, De Witt, King William, &c.

† It merits observation, that the system of defence for the barrier, laid down by King William, and afterwards adopted in the treaty of Utrecht, viz. of placing the principal garrisons of the barrier in the custody of the Dutch troops, was invariably followed till the accession of the late Emperor Joseph II. This Prince, however, by taking possession of the barrier himself, and soon afterwards by destroying the fortifications of the towns which formed it, held out the temptation to the French monarchy, of exciting factions in Holland to overturn the Dutch government, as it has done that of British America; as by rendering Holland a dependency on France, they could easily over-run the narrow but open country of the Austrian Netherlands, and thus equally subdue their friends and their foes. The politics of Joseph thus prepared the whole of the Netherlands for the calamities, which the French Republic, continuing the schemes of the monarchy they have subverted, have brought upon the Low Countries.

1. The

1. The Dutch, from the situation of their powerful and unrestrained neighbour, must, in the event of any future war with Great Britain, act in obedience to France, because a French navy in the Scheldt, more powerful than the crippled navy of Holland, would be ready to crush it, or rather to put it in requisition, to destroy the coasting and East Sea trade of Britain, as well as to make an attack upon the north coast of England, and upon the coasts of Scotland and Ireland.

2. That balance of trade in Europe must be displaced, which has had its centre in Britain, from which one great line has run through Holland to Germany connected with Flanders; and another to the states bordering on the Baltic; and if this centre could be transferred to France, with the Austrian Netherlands annexed to it, it must, of necessity, command the trade of the Dutch Netherlands and the north of Germany, and depress the hitherto undisturbed commerce between Britain and the Northern Powers,

\* The commerce of Zealand with England consisted chiefly in corn, and the returns made were principally spirits and East-India spiceries.

III. Having



III. Having thus separately considered the constituents of the commerce of the Netherlands, Austrian and Dutch, it remains in the last place, to examine the commercial effects which probably would result from the former balance of trade being destroyed, and to offer conjectures respecting the probable commercial consequences which would result from a general peace taking place, in the present situation of affairs in Europe.

The commercial effects, upon the first supposition, viz. that of the former balance of trade being destroyed, by the annexation of the Netherlands, Austrian and Dutch, to France, under the different possible forms of government which that country may assume, would probably be the following ;—

1. The preceding evidence has shewn, that the situation of Holland, with respect to Germany and the North, and the political privileges given by the Dutch government to the merchants of every country, rendered it a centre of exchange for the produce of the northern European nations,  
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seeking the productions of the southern, and *vice versa*.\* It is obvious that none of these advantages can remain to the Dutch, if they ultimately become a department of France, and it is not possible, under any circumstances in which the overgrown territories of France can be placed, that this centre of exchange could be removed to it ; —

—Because, if the monarchy be restored, its aggrandizement, by such an accession of territory, would place commercial nations in a dependence upon it, inconsistent with that confidence in the probity and regularity of its dealings, which is required, or which has been practiced by the Dutch ;—

—Because, if a new dynasty be begun in France, the preceding argument would be still stronger, than upon the supposition of the restoration of the ancient race ;—

—Because, if the present Oligarchy, (the Di-

\* Holland, as a dependency on France, could no longer be one of the centres of exchange in Europe.

rectory) shall be confirmed, from its very spirit it would preclude France from becoming a centre of exchange. The divided power of its five sovereigns must produce one of two effects; either different views of aggrandizement by new conquests; or the influence of one of them, reducing the others to become the tools of his power. With either of these extremes the commercial confidence of foreign nations is irreconcilable. —Admitting it however to be possible, that these five sovereigns shall have but one principle, viz. that of promoting the arts of peace, and of weighing the interests of their country and of other nations in the balance of justice; still, by the new constitution, their reign is temporary, and it is not in the scale of probability, that their successors would act up to this perfect character, and yet, nothing short of it could render France a centre of exchange, by giving to it that confidence which would induce foreign nations to entrust them with their property;—

—Because, if the revolutionary system should return, it would be as inconsistent with the confidence of the misérables, who are to groan under it

it, as it would be with the interest of nations at a distance from its yoke.

2. The credit, mercantile and national, resulting from the confidence which has formed and continued a centre of exchange in the Dutch Netherlands, would, under any of the preceding forms of government in France, be impaired, if not annihilated.

It is unnecessary to re-apply any of the preceding reasonings to establish this effect, farther than to observe, that even supposing the former monarchy of France to be restored, and with it that degree of security given to property, which the old laws of France conferred, still credit in this country, from the spirit of the government, was less certain, than under those commercial governments where credit was a primary political object. Judging also from the recent calamities of France, (and these calamities have, in some degree, extended to the countries we are supposing annexed to it,) its national credit must be more fluctuating, than in any epocha of its commercial history.

3. The ingenuity and industry which have created the arts, manufactures, commerce and

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navigation of the Dutch and of Britain, connected with the certainty of the exchanges and the credit of these countries, could not, under any of the preceding forms of government in France, be exercised by that people.

It is obvious, upon a retrospect, that the Dutch Netherlands, as a dependency of France, and no longer either a centre of exchange or of credit, could neither preserve the limited portion of arts and manufactures which they possessed, nor, by commerce and navigation, encourage the arts and manufactures of other nations.

It is not less obvious, from the desolation which has taken place in France, that no form of government which it may assume, could speedily restore its arts and manufactures; and no encouragements which it could hold out to the commerce and navigation of the Dutch, could enable that people speedily to revive their traffic with Austrian Flanders, equally humbled with themselves; or with Germany, become distrustful of a neighbour, no longer in a situation to fulfil commercial engagements: Hence those amounts of British produce, and of British foreign merchandise, which formerly, under the experience of the Dutch credit

credit, supplied their demands, could not be entrusted to merchants no longer at liberty to fulfil their engagements, but on the contrary, liable to break them, under the commands of a predominant master, and it is not probable, under any subordination in France, that it can soon either revive its own arts and manufactures, encourage those of its new dependents, or render their commerce and navigation subservient to the markets which they formerly frequented.

Supposing, however, order to arise from the political chaos under which France and its dependencies are buried, it must be a long time indeed, before the arts of peace can be revived, or the funds which nourish them be brought into activity; and it is more than probable, before these ends can be produced, that the restless and plundering temper of the Revolutionists may lead them to new schemes of aggrandizement, which again may desolate civilized Europe.

Having considered the commercial effects, which would necessarily result from the former balance of trade being destroyed, we have next to conjecture respecting the consequences of its being restored.

1. The nations which have been defolated by the war, will, in proportion to the evils which they have experienced, and to the greater or lesser advantages of their natural and commercial situation, recover their level in the exchanges, credit, commerce, and navigation of Europe,

—Holland has been drained of large sums of money, by contributions as well as by the following indirect pillage. The inhabitants have been compelled to receive assignats for the necessaries which the soldiers bought, and the States compelled to give money to the inhabitants for these assignats; though in paying their contributions, they either must remit the assignats at the value they bear at Paris, (that is 5, 6, 7, or even 8000 livres for a Louis d'or, which was only valued at twenty-four livres under the old government) or pay in specie, and keep the useless assignats till the creation of French credit.

The Dutch, however, have hitherto suffered less than the other conquered countries; if therefore, at the general peace, they shall become emancipated, from their character and from their

their situation they will slowly, but certainly, recover a place in the commercial world. Industry and parsimony in this people are natural and habitual, and must enable them sooner than any European nation, to collect the funds upon which to re-commence, what they chiefly depended upon, their navigation; and by it, to supply not only their own wants, but to become again the pedlars and carriers, to supply the increased wants of the other nations of Europe.\* Their situation relatively to Flanders, Germany and Britain, will again exclusively give them opportunities of bringing the produce of the two former countries, to be exchanged for that of the latter. If thus they again become a centre of exchanges, their credit will revive in proportion to the extent of them, though both will obviously depend upon the restoration of the

\* During the present war the Americans have got possession of a part of the carrying trade, but the distance of America from Europe must restore some share of it to the Dutch; and the various natural produce of America must (putting the probability of revolutions in that country out of view) lead them to higher mercantile concerns than the moderate profits from freight, with which the Dutch, for ages, have been contented.

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The Dutch besides, have made large loans, both to foreign sovereigns, to proprietors of land and to commercial houses, and have vested large sums in the funds of every country of Europe : this wealth must remain to them as a stock, at a general peace, and as the interests upon such loans will be chiefly paid in goods, the Dutch have a means of renewing their commerce more certain than any other nation possesses. A portion of these loans are in the Imperial dominions, and in those of Prussia, which will have an effect upon the German trade ; their loans and stock in Sweden and Denmark, will, at least, bring them back their moderate share of the East Sea trade ; while their money in the British funds must contribute to the re-establishment of their trade with this country.

—Flanders, from the fertility of the soil and the secondary traffic which it carried on, partly with France, but chiefly with Holland and England, will, from its political relation to Germany, and from its commercial relations to Britain and to Holland, gradually regain its former level, though this restoration will depend upon its barrier being

being restored, and upon the commercial regulations which may, more or less, facilitate its exchanges. Its commercial intercourse with France, must, from recent oppressions, and from the impaired arts and manufactures of that country, be slowly re-established, and consist, for a time, rather in simple barter than in merchandize proceeding upon credit.

—The frontier of Germany, from Alsace to the Austrian Netherlands, has experienced so great a degree of desolation, that it can, for a long time, but feebly contribute, by its natural or manufactured produce, even its former proportion to the Flemish and Dutch markets. All the rich provinces on the banks of the Rhine, from Mayence to Cologne, and all the rich towns on the French side of the Rhine, and several on the German side, have, by contributions and by pillage, lost their wealth, and with it the funds which fed their arts and manufactures; of course, their liberation from French thralldom must leave them in an impoverished state, open indeed to supplies from the interior of Germany, but little able to contribute, of themselves, returns for those supplies, and less able to pay for the supply of their wants to Holland and Flanders, conveying to them the  
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manufactured produce, or foreign merchandize of Britain.

—France, from its exhausted state, from the annihilation of its arts, manufactures and commerce, and from its narrowed means of reviving its navigation, can only take its place in the commercial world, in the proportion that its natural produce shall enable it, since its manufactures and funds for trade will be to create, before its exchanges can be aided by credit, or that credit regain its former commercial weight with European or distant nations.

2. The nations which have escaped desolation from the war, must, from their resources and credit, recover their former commercial level, and have a balance of trade, in their favor, without rivalry in exchanges or in credit by France, or the countries desolated by its arms.

—Great Britain will necessarily take the first place among the nations of this description, since the expences of the war, however great, have neither impaired its commerce, nor its national credit. In fact, the commercial evils, which have surrounded it, have neither checked its arts and  
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manufactures, nor materially obstructed its trade. As its exchanges must be greater, in the degree that Holland, Flanders, Germany, and even France shall require its produce and its foreign merchandize; and, as its funds are equal to these supplies, and its credit unrivalled, it not only must retain the markets of Europe, but almost exclusively possess them; while its naval power, even supposing the *uti possidetis* in the West and East-Indies to take place, will, for many years, give it the balance of trade.

—The German states, which have, in like manner, had their countries exempted from the desolations of the war, will necessarily recover their former level, for if Austria, which takes the lead in them, has incurred a debt to Britain, that proportion of the interest, to be paid to British subjects, will, like the interest on the Dutch loans, become the means of giving to Britain a share of the depôt trade, and of course cement the commercial with the political relation of the two countries.

—Prussia, from possessing Thorn, and of course controlling the trade of Dantzic, and from its port of Memmel, must continue to send those bulky

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commodities to Britain, which have given employment to so large a share of our tonnage and seamen. From these ports Prussia will regain its former level, while that portion of its dependencies, which is situated in the duchy of Cleves and in High Guelderland, will return to their former commercial intercourse with Holland and Flanders.

—Spain, from its established intercourse with England, will, in a commercial view, necessarily return to its level, and as many of the European productions, which it sent to South America, were drawn from the countries, the manufactures of which have been ruined by the war, it probably will derive its chief supplies from Britain.

—The states of Italy, which have been exhausted or overawed by the French, during the war, will, if Great Britain retain its superiority in the Mediterranean, necessarily resort to the market, where their commodities will find a sale, where their wants can be supplied, and where credit alone can be given.

—Russia, from its commercial relation to Britain, will of course meet the British uniform demand, as well as open profitable markets to the  
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the country, which alone is able to keep up an intercourse with it.

—Sweden and Denmark, which have contributed, by their neutrality, to the fatal devastations of France, must return to their former secondary commercial transactions.

It remains only to offer conjectures respecting the probable commercial consequences, supposing, in the present state of affairs in Europe, a general peace to take place.

The revolution in France having not only changed the political and commercial character of that nation, but subverted those of the countries desolated by its arms, and the effects of this event having considerably unhinged the political and commercial relations, both of the nations which still oppose the progress of France; of those which have receded from the confederacy, and of those which, by a system of neutrality, have contributed to the distress of every power with whom they were in political and commercial alliance, we must, in reasoning from the balance of power to that of trade, advert to what would be commer-

cially safe or permanent, and begin with the circumstances, under which the contracting powers may be placed.

It must be obvious, that the present circumstances of France are such, from the fall of its arts, its manufactures, its commerce, and its navigation, that it can offer but a very precarious tenure, for any political relations which may be formed with it, and a still more precarious tenure for any commercial relations which may be attempted, between its merchants and those of foreign countries, or any stipulations in a commercial treaty founded upon these relations.

We can therefore conjecture only respecting the commercial relations, which may be attempted between France and the Powers now at war with it, between it and the Powers who have acknowledged the Republic, and between it and the Powers whose neutrality recognized the French revolution.

—Britain, under the first of these descriptions, upon any supposition, except that of the restoration of the Monarchy, cannot revert to the stipulations in the treaty of commerce, 1787. Any treaty of commerce, which we can form with the French Directory, must proceed wholly upon that  
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commercial intercourse which may take place, between the merchants of the two countries. This intercourse can, at first, consist only of something like simple barter, for commercial speculation cannot be supposed so extravagant, as to induce the merchants and manufacturers of Britain to lend their credit, to any extent, to merchants in France, because all the old French traders are annihilated, and the probity of the new dealers, is a thing to be created, and in its progress must be held as liable to new revolutionary calamities.

—Germany, as a commercial country, in so far as it has not been desolated by the French, either must continue its trade by the Elbe, from Hamburg, &c. or it must, if the Netherlands revert to its old masters, send its goods by the Rhine, through Holland, under the circumstances already described.

—Russia, having during the war continued its commercial connexions with Britain, and having even before the war, but secondary commercial transactions with France, will be under similar difficulties with Britain, in establishing even its former intercourse with the French merchants,



chants, or in founding upon it, a commercial alliance.

Of the commercial Powers who have acknowledged the Republic, Spain is the most considerable. As a Monarchy, Spain can have little political confidence in the faith of its republican neighbours. Though the Spanish government may seem to conform to the stipulations in the treaty, it must dread the consequences of re-admitting French adventurers among its subjects ; the Spanish merchant however will be under no such pressure, in declining exchanges, on credit, with the French merchant, more particularly when he considers, that they can be more safely made with England, enabling him by its credit to furnish the articles required by government, for the supply of South America.

—The portion of commerce furnished by Prussia, coming chiefly from Dantzic, will be under the same caution, with respect to the French merchant, by which the neutral Powers have been directed.

The neutral powers of Sweden and Denmark, and the States of America, have indeed, during the war, supplied the French with their produce,

duce, but without giving them that credit, which can render transactions solid or permanent. At first the produce of these countries was carried to France, to be exchanged for French produce and for specie, but so little faith have these neutral nations had, either in the Republic, or in the French merchant, that the money has of late been remitted, before the foreign merchant would run the risk of putting a cargo, at the immoral discretion of the Committee of Public Safety. It is farther remarkable, that while these neutral nations supplied the French, neither as states nor as merchants have they received, in payment, the paper currency of the Republic, whose sovereignty they recognised, both by sending and receiving ambassadors.

From these commercial circumstances, under which other nations are placed relatively to France, it appears ;—That trade cannot be considered as placed upon a safe basis, in so far as regards France, until the political situation of that country shall be such, as to afford security to the property of its own subjects, and its laws such, as to compel payments to foreigners, entrusting the French merchant with their property. Hence,  
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its intercourse with other nations, will not so much depend on any form which its government may suddenly assume, as upon the practice under that government, which may gain to its merchants the confidence of foreigners. It does not then appear, either if the present Directory be the Sovereigns who are to be the transacting parties in a peace with the Bel-ligerent Powers, or the guarantee of the treaties made with the powers who have receded from the war, or even with the neutral powers, that the safety, which is the first constituent of commercial intercourse, can be soon or easily obtained from France.

From a like reference to the circumstances, under which other nations are placed, relatively to France, it is obvious, that trade with that country cannot be considered as permanent, till the internal government shall be of that description, and the exchanges attended with that probity, upon which credit (the spirit of trade) can be established.—'Till this event happen, no commercial commissions of any importance can either be given or received, and till they

they can, trade cannot be held as resting upon a permanent basis, because till then, commerce can neither become one of the resources of France, nor commercial transactions be deemed, as exempted from interruption and public fraud.

From the probable commercial circumstances in which France, and other nations in Europe may be placed, supposing peace, in the present state of affairs, to take place, we may offer conjectures, respecting the political connexions between the European Powers, and the degree in which they would lead to exchanges, that would be more or less commercially safe or permanent.

A first conjecture seems to be, that if France shall revert to a Monarchy, its political relations will naturally be formed with Spain, Sardinia, and the Italian states. In this case, the danger to the tranquillity of Europe, and therefore to commerce, from the exhausted state of France itself, and of the Powers allied to it, must be less than before the fall of the Monarchy.

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—Britain in this event, would revert to its connexion with Holland and Austrian Flanders, upon the basis of the treaties of commerce, founded upon that of Utrecht, and of course would be the ally of Austria, while from opposition to this power, and from its entanglements with the French Republic, Prussia might throw its political weight into the scale of France, but the portion of its territory which borders on the Netherlands, must be commercially connected with the Dutch.

—The commercial intercourse of America with France must be partial, compared to what must take place between it and Britain, from the credit of the former being annihilated, and that of the latter entire.

The commercial balance, from the whole of these circumstances, will rest in Britain, because a centre of credit, and therefore of exchange, more safe and permanent than could, for many years, be found in Europe, and because, supposing it to retain but a portion of its acquisitions, in the West and East Indies, it could best afford the commodities, for which the European nations would exchange their produce.

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A second conjecture seems to be, that if either a new Dynasty, or the present Directory be established in France, its political relations could be supposed to proceed, but in one of two ways; either the nations bordering upon it, Spain, Italy, and the German Princes, on the one side of the Rhine, from impressions of fear, and Prussia from jealousy of Austria, would form its allies; or, these countries, experiencing revolutions, might become from interest, its confederates, to enable them, combinedly, to oppose Britain, Austria, and Russia, defending themselves from the effects of a general convulsion. Upon such a supposition, even more strongly than in the preceding case, the balance of the remaining trade in Europe, in every view of safety or permanency, would rest in Britain, accompanied with the circumstances, with which the preceding conjecture was illustrated.

A third conjecture seems to be, that if under any possible form of government, France shall be hemmed in within its ancient limits, the safety and permanency of the European trade, particularly that of Great Britain, will depend upon the arrangements made, at a general peace, of the foreign possessions of the European Maritime Powers.

—Should France retain its West India possessions, and the Spanish part of St. Domingo, judging from the avarice and ambition of its republican rulers, and from the easy attack which they could make on Spain, they would probably interrupt commerce by new schemes of conquest in South America.

—If the possessions of France in the East Indies, should be restored, it would have a double temptation to re-commence hostilities with Britain, viz. that of cutting off from us our Indian possessions, and that of preventing us from assisting Spain, in protecting its South American dominions.

—If Holland have either a part, or the whole of its possessions restored to it, and yet remain under its present usurpers, France would necessarily draw the Dutch into its schemes on the West and East Indies. In this case, the war would become maritime, and the parties be, France and Holland, and Britain and Spain.

—If Flanders be restored to Austria, the Emperor would become a party, and the ally of Britain, the safety and permanency of whose trade in the Narrow Seas, can never admit of the annexation of Flanders to France.

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Under any of these suppositions, the balance of exchange might vibrate between Britain and Holland, but that of trade, proceeding on credit, would rest in Britain, whether we consider it, in its relations to the European Powers, or, in the relation it has to the West and East Indies.





